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IN FOCUS

LS230

Shanmukha

"Nādaloludai Brahmananda Mandave Manasa", sang the bard of Tiruvayyar. SHANMUKHA wishes to greet its Readers, Contributors, Advertisers and Well-Wishers heralding the New Year with the 'Brahmananda' of Music.

The issue offers a vintage fare, what with; the sacred hymns of a Shaivite Apostle and the rich heritage of devotional forms of Kirtanas with potential classicism bestowed by the Tamil Trinity etc. Padas of a royal-composer form an interesting segment too.

A chance peep into the archives yielded a harvest of information with an indepth analysis regarding the evolution of film music - from classical to light to hybridised stock. SHANMUKHA reproduces some stalwarts' analyses.

The issue delineates as well, the emergence of the Sabhas and organisations consequent to the shift in patronage of arts from temple and royal courts to the public, the role they play in promoting, propagating and preserving the fine arts and the responsibilities and challenges they face.

"King of Percussion & Queen of Melody" in Tamil echoes the experiences and experiments of a Percussion wizard, a Sangita Kalanidhi.

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Manickavachakar, Shaivite Apostle

By 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

The month of *Margazhi* has been selected from ancient days as the most suitable for devotion and penance. In the South, two apostles, viz., Sri Andal and Sri Manickavachakar have specially helped with immense foresight and solicitude musical devotion with their resplendent songs of charm and grace. Further the life of Manickavachakar finds reflection in the life and advent of Bhadrachala Ramadasa in several aspects. The former, an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva, was in far south and the latter, a staunch Rama Bhakta, was in Andhra Pradesh. Both had something to do with government services and both were such dedicated devotees that they renovated with public funds the temples respectively at *Avudayarkoil* in Pudukottai district and at *Bhadrachala* on the Godavari and were incarcerated respectively by the Pandiyan King and the Nawab. They got released thanks to divine intervention. Both have left resplendent, lustrous songs of absolute devotion in Tamil, and in Telugu and Sanskrit which are fully in popular use. Their devotion to God was unexcelled and their songs [*Tiruvempavai* and *Kirtanas*] bear witness to their *Adwaitic* integration with God.

The life of the Shaivite Apostle, Manickavachakar has integrated significance in the month of *Margazhi* when his songs rich in concept, lyric and music resound in temples, bhajan mandalis and at homes. "When I sing the soulful hymns of Manickavachakar, it is like taking sugarcane juice mixed with honey, milk and fruit essences which

never surfeits', exclaims the ecstatic saint, Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal. Here is the advice of the apostle Manickavachakar:

'Pan sumanda paadal parisu padaittu arulum'.

[Sing with ecstasy songs on the Lord soaked in enchanting Ragas.

He shall bestow his Grace.]

'Pann sumanda' indicates the criterion that prayers are to be soaked in delicious *Raga*-based music to be fruitful as the Lord Himself is *Gana lola!* 'Tackle Him on home ground' is the sage advice of the apostle who has experienced the fruits of musical prayers! He lays emphasis on the musical rendition of prayers as the *raja marga* to secure God's blessings!

The following beautiful song of his brings out the 'Oneness of God' with remarkable clarity:

*"Potri aruluga nin adhiyam padamalar
Potri aruluga nin andamam sendalirgal
Potri ella uyirkkum tottramam porpadam ...
Potri Mal Nanmuganum kanada Pundarigam ..."*

The learned saint in his *Tiruvempavai* songs clarifies that God has neither a beginning nor an end and is first and foremost 'the One' God who dispenses birth, protection, end, blessing and salvation to all living beings. The beauty and essence of the *Bhagawad Gita* are elegantly brought out by him.

His song *Kaadar Kuzhaiyada* is a gripping, illumining, picturesque illustration of the celestial dance

[*Tandavam*] of Lord Shiva. Ear studs, exquisite golden ornaments, flowing hairs, flowers of fragrance that adorn them, as well as the humming bees that hover around those flowers and garlands, are all seen dancing with Him! This affirms and clarifies why poet Uthukadu Venkatasubbayyar makes Yasoda advise Baby Krishna to come without His jerks in song *Adadu asangadu vaa, Kanna*. Why? In His jerks and dance, Yasoda tells Him, the fourteen worlds too join! And to cap such envious enthralling scene, there is naturally copious music to accompany and sustain it all. Manickavachakar is practically seen as an involved participant in that Ananda Koothu - the Divine Cosmic Dance of Supreme Joy, the entire Universe joining it.

One of the sixty-three apostles of Lord Shiva and one of the 'Prime Four', Manickavachakar had a colourful and productive life like Bhadrachala Ramadasa. Manickavachakar was saint, philosopher, scholar, architect. His *vigraha* adorns the major temples of the South and his birth star is the occasion for annual celebration. At the Pandyan capital of Madurai, his life comes up for special celebration as part of the *Tiruvilayadal Purana* [Miracles of Lord Shiva] festivities in the celebrated temple of Sri Sundareshwara and Devi Sri Minakshi.

The brief story of his illustrious life is that deputed with adequate funds by Arimardana Pandya, the ruler, to purchase horses, he meets his preceptor Gokazhi *en route*. Inspired by divine intervention at Avudayarkoil and attracted by Lord Atmanatha Swamy, the presiding deity [Shiva], his keen eye notices the poor condition of the temple.

He repairs it with the money he had been entrusted with. The temple is one of the finest *Shiva Kshetras* and enjoys architectural marvels. The Lord there is in *arupa* form - without the Linga as it is in other temples. Situated in a sandy tract far from mountains and bounded by rivers, it passes comprehension and indeed intriguing how huge boulders of granite were brought in those distant days and quite many parts of the temple constructed in granite. This wondrous divine, unparalleled feat has yielded the phrase '*Avudayarkoil Tiruppani*' meaning an impossibility coming true. Naturally he is incarcerated by the ruler for misdirection of funds. The Lord intervenes by bringing a caravan of stately, matchless horses which won the esteem [and later regret] of the ruler, who instantaneously releases the saint-composer. That is short-lived. The night sees the entire lot of horses turning into a pack of jackals to the amazement of the ruler and the ruled! Ultimately the saintliness of Manickavachakar is recognized. Thus he attains a legendary status worthy of his devotion, erudition, accomplishments and personal integrity.

The apostle has composed lucid, inspiring songs of ethereal beauty and devotion in chaste Tamil full of celestial thoughts and prosodic elegance and fragrance. His works are:

Tiruvempavai
Tiruppalli Ezhucchi
Tiruvachakame [including *Tirukkovaivar*, etc.]
Tirusadakam
Tiruvammanaiyodal

Manickavachakar was a profound scholar of eminence and a musical soul. His lyric excels in prosodic beauties and lends itself to musical excellence. *Tiruvempavai* and *Tiruppalli Ezhucchi* are

sung regularly in temples, *bhajans* and homes and come up for special full-length recital during the month of Margasirsha. They are sung by Tevara goshtis [singers of Tamil hymns] following processions of *utsava vigrahas* during festivals.

That God Vision could be only 'experienced' and not 'perceived with physical senses', Manickavachakar gives positive and lucid expression to when he stresses, "*Gitangal paadal aadudal allaal, kettariyom, unai kandarivar?* [We have heard of Thee and of Your advents only through music and dance but have never heard nor seen You personally.] The saint clarifies for the benefit of the world that none has 'seen' the Lord with physical senses but many has had rich 'experience' of His Divine Presence. God is cognizable and experienced only through *Jnana - Jnaname Ambalam, Anandame Tirukkoothu!* None can experiment with or on Him but like Ramakrishna Paramahansa could enjoy the enthralling experience and the exhilaration of His Presence *ad infinitum*.

He tells the Lord in a convivial mood,

'We have heard it said that You are present in seers and *bhootas*. People sing and dance to the averment that You have no beginnings nor any end but we have never heard of anyone having seen Thee in person!'
'Bhudangal toru nindra enin allal
"Pokkilan varavilan" ena niunaip pulavor
Gitangal paadutal aaduthal allaal
kettariyom, unaik kandarivarai ...
 [Tiruppalli Ezhucchi - [Suprabatham]

The saint is expounding the truth conveyed in *Kathopanishad* [I-III.15]. viz.,

'*Asabdam, asparsam, arupam, avyayam*' etc., and II-III-12, viz., '*Naiva vaca, na manasa pratum sakya na cakshusha*.

The beauty of the song lies in its subtle vivacious presentation of high Vedic truths. He clarifies with lively poetic grace further,

'Lord, Thou art the most original of originals. Brhma, Tirumal, Rudra and Devas may not be able to adequately understand You, nor come closer to You, nor know that You are but the sweetest juice of tasty fruits, nectar and elixir. But it is easy for us to know it all as You have condescended to come down to us for our spiritual welfare and enlightenment'.

In the beginning of his *Tiruvempavai*, he sings *Adhiyum andhamum illa Arut Perum Jyoti!* - the Lord is without any origin nor has an end. In the concluding song, he sustains it but differently in his profound wisdom saluting and hailing the Sacred Feet of the Lord as "The most ancient flowery feet [*pada malar*], the concluding final tender shoots [*sentalirgal*], the golden feet [*porpatham*] that sustain the populace, etc". In rich endearing and noble terms and phrases like *Ananda Malaiye* [mountain of ecstasy], *alai kadale* [ocean full of beneficial waves], *en vazh mudal porule* [the foremost and first of my life], *Aaramude* [Nectar of the world], etc., he hails and salutes the Lord passionately. Devout ecstasy, matchless bhakti, boundless adoration, wonder and nirguna atma rivedan mark his songs as something unique. There is in profuse measure the passionate *bhakti* of the devout, the *vatsalya bhava* of the fond mother and the gratitude of the beneficiary in his *bhava*-laden songs.

TAMIL TRINITY
(Muttutandavar, Marimutta Pillai and Arunachala Kavi)
THE POTENTIAL CLASSICISM IN THEIR CREATIONS
By Dr. Premeela Gurumurthy

The Tamil music tradition has come down to us from two sources. The literary and the singing tradition. References to music, Pann, musical instruments and the Panar who were professional musicians have all been mentioned in *Tolkappiyam*, a treatise on Tamil Grammar. This work is said to belong to the 3rd century B. C. In *Silappatikaram* in the "Arangetrukkadai", mention is made of Madhavi the dancer

"With the exception of the Vedic hymns the *Tevaram* constitutes the earliest examples of the music of the ancient period," said Prof. P. Sambamurthy. Just as the Vaidikas preserved the Vedic hymns, the Oduvars preserved the music of the *Tevaram*. The Oduvars are traditional singers in the temples who render the *Tevaram* and the *Tirumurai* hymns belonging to the Saivite tradition.



and while elaborating on her maiden performance the author Ilango a Chera Prince speaks about the Panns, the rules and regulations attributed to the dance teacher, the performer on the Yazh, Kuzhal and Muzhavu meaning the Harp, Flute and the Drum. Though many musical works were lost, *Silappatikaram* and *Panchamarabu* remained being valuable sources of musical system prevailing then.

The Sangam works, *Ettuttokai* and *Pattu Pattu* enumerate the life and social conditions of the people of South India comprising the Chera, Chola and the Pandya regions. In these works many references are found to the musical activity. Panns, Panar and many instruments have been mentioned.

The following is a reference figuring in *Paripadal*.

"Naivalam putta narampiyai Cirpoivalam
puttana Pana nin Pattu [Paripadal 18-2-21]

The Panan is singing, tuning his Yazh in the Pann Naivalam. The Panns which were prevalent during the Sangam period were Ambal, Kanci, Kamaram, Kurinji, Sevvali, Naivalam, Pancuram, Padumalai, Palai. Marudam and Vilari.

Following the Sangam period began the era of devotional music [7th century] with the *Tevaram* composers. Tirujnanasambandar, Tirunavukkarasar and Sundaramurthy Nayanar hailed as *Tevaram* Trinity. They revived Saivism through music and Tamil,

"Tamilodisaipadal Marandariyen"
un namam en navil marandariyen

(Kuttrayinavaru)

[Appar]

Innisaiyal Tamil parapu Jnanasambandar

[Sundarar 62:8]

Ezhisaiyin Tamilal isaindettiya Pattivaikum

[Sundarar(100:10)]

Sambandar refers to Innisaiyar Padavallar [132:11] "*Tidankol navin Isaittondar Padum*" [254:9]

Similarly we have the Twelve Alvars who have poured out their devotion in the 4000 hymns known as *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*.

Sirkazhi is the birth place of Saint Jnanasambandar. The three composers Muttutandavar, Arunachalakavi and Marimuttapillai - the Tamil Trinity - are known as "Kazhi Muvar" who belonged to this sacred seat of music.

MUTTUTANDAVAR [1560 - 1640]

Kazhi is also known as Sir Kazhi. This pilgrim centre is very sacred to the Saivites as it is here that Saint Tirujnanasambandar was fed with divine milk, by the Goddess Parvati when he was only three years old.

During the 16th century in this same sacred Sirkazhi there lived a pious devotee named Tandavan who was in service at the temple of Toniappar, also known as Brahmapurisa. He meticulously went to the temple every day and rendered his service and sang songs in praise of the Lord. His innate sense of music induced him to frequently visit the house of the temple dancer where he listened to the music. This earned him the wrath of his family which neglected him. Tandavan was dejected and is said to have been afflicted with some incurable disease. One day he sat in meditation near the place where the instruments are kept in the temple and fell asleep. The temple authorities had locked the doors unaware of Tandavan being inside.

Around midnight he woke up hungry and along with his physical agony cried out to the Lord. The compassionate Goddess appeared in the guise of a ten year old girl resembling the daughter of the Chief Priest of the temple, gave him food from the temple vessel and said he would be relieved of his ailment if he went to Chidambaram and sang in praise of the Lord. To the baffled Tandavan who did not know to compose, she said that at the temple he should start singing with the first word he heard, with the God's grace. She then disappeared in the form of a light. Tandavan was overjoyed realising that it was the Goddess Herself who came to his rescue. In the morning everyone heard about his divine vision and saw the radiance on his face. From then onwards Tandavan came to be called Muttutandavan.

That morning he went to Chidambaram and heard the word

"Bhuloka", and burst into the song "Bhuloka Kailasagiri Chidambaram allal". It is said that he received five gold coins. In due course of time he was cured of both his physical ailment and poverty. Everyday he composed a song after he heard a word uttered by a devotee. One day none spoke and the song "Pesaade Nenje", came forth.

Two more miracles happened in his life. Once when he was proceeding to Chidambaram from Sirkazhi the river Kollidam was in spate, he could not reach the other side. "Kanamal Vinile Kalam Kazhittene", he poured out in agony. Promptly the water receded and he crossed the river. Happily sprung forth "Darisanam Seivene". One day on his way to the Temple he was bitten by a snake. He then sang the famous song "Arumarundoru" and was relieved from the effect of the poison.

Muttutandavar has composed 60 Kirtanas and 40 Padams. The earliest publication brought out by Narayana Mudaliar & Sons, is dated 1905, which contains details of his biography and the compositions-text, Raga and Tala. At the end of the book 30 compositions of Marimutta Pillai also have been published.

'KIRTANA'

Muttutandavar is reverentially considered the architect of 'Kirtanas' in Tamil. In Telugu it was the Tallapakkam composers who introduced the Kirtana format.

The term 'Kirtana' is usually called 'Kirtanai' in Tamil. It is derived from the root *kirti* meaning praise, fame, to glorify, etc. 'Cir', 'Cirti' also means pride, praise

and fame. In the Tamil tradition the term 'Kirtanai' means devotional songs. Prior to this form Tevaram, the Prabandham of the Alvars and the Tiruppugazh were popularly sung. They are all in poetic form governed by strict adherence to the rules and regulations of poetic metre whereas the Kirtanais are in prose form clothed in simple words giving ample freedom to render them in music in a leisurely manner. It is therefore a landmark in the history of Tamil music that Muttutandavar became the pioneer of 'Kirtanas' in Tamil. In Sanskrit the term 'Kirtana' figures as one among the Navavidha Bhakti.

The Kirtanas generally have the sections Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Some only the Pallavi and multiple Charnams. In Tamil music tradition these sections are referred to as *Taravu*, *Tunai Taravu* and *Tazhisai*.

In the 1905 publication we find only Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Muttutandavar's compositions comprise 3, 4 or 5 Charanas. One *Chidambaram* in Nadanamakriya (Eka Tala) has seven Charanas. Each Charana has two lines. All the Kirtanas have the three sections. None with Pallavi and multiple Charanas. The Ragas given in this book along with the text are Kalyani 9 compositions including the very first kirtanai Bhuloka kayilasa giri; Todi - (4); Nilambari (1); Ahiri (4); Nadanamakriya (5); Mukhari (2); Kambhoji (2); Saveri (1); Pantuvarali (4); Nagavarali (1); Punnagavarali (2); Byagadai (1); Sankarabaranam (3); Kurinji (1); Gowli-pantu (2); Ananda Bhairavi (6); Karnatakasarangam (1); Bhairavi (1); Cencurutti (1); Paraz (1); Saurashtram (2); Mohanam (3); Kedargoula (1).

The Padams are in Kalyani, Nadanamakriya, Ashadakannadam, Saveri, Nilambari, Yadukulakamboji, Saurashtram, Kurinji, Sankarabaranam, Ananda Bhairavi, Mohanam, Yamunakalyani and Kamboji set to Adi, Eka, Jhampa, Ata, Triputa and Dhruva Talas. It is interesting to note that six of the Sapta Talas figure in the Padams.

Pallavi

Sevikka vendum Iya - Chidambaram
Sevikka vendum Iya

Anupallavi

Sevikka vendum Chidambaramurtiyam
Devadi devan Tiruchchannidi Kandu

Charana

Karanai mamukattu aindu Karattanai
Karpaga rayarnai mukurniyana
chirapuliyurpadi melai vasal vazh
Devar sirai mitta sevar kodiyanai

In this Kirtana there is a significant feature where the phrase *Sevikka vendum*, opening the Pallavi is also repeated in the Anupallavi. Muttutandavar adopted this style of reiterating the idea in both Pallavi and Anupallavi in a few other compositions.

Pallavi

Kandavar vindilare anudinam
vindavar kandilare

Anupallavi

Kandavar vindilar vindavar kandilar

This phrase is a common proverb with a spiritual connotation that anyone who witnesses a divine experience will not speak about it. Those who keep speaking about such matters will never see or have such a spiritual experience.

Two more examples may be cited: Kedaragoula Kirtana presently sung in Kharaharapriya :

Pallavi

Mayavittai Seigirane Ambalavanan
Mayavittai Seigirane

Anupallavi

Mayavittai Seigirane kayanondreduttukkundu

The other is in Karnataka Sarangam currently sung in Latangi.

Pallavi

Darisittalavil mukti peralam puliyuranai

Anupallavi

Darisittalavil mukti peralam

Such a feature is also seen in a *Tevaram* of Tirunavukkarasar :

Talaiye ni vanangai Talaimalatalaikanindu

Talaiyale paliterum Talaivanai - Talaiye ni vanangai

The same could be attributed to Kirtanas of Bhadrachala Ramdas and Tyagaraja. For example, *Paluke Bangaramayena* (Ananda Bhairavi), *Nannubrovamani Cheppave* (Kalyani) of the former and *Dorakuna* (Bilahari) and *Sukhi Evvaro* (Kanada) of the latter.

As for the musical version the earliest publication of *Sevikka vendum* is in Kalyani, Eka Talam. The notation of this is found in the book *Dravida Ganam* by K. V. Srinivasa Iyengar and published by M. S. Ramulu & Sons. In the preface Srinivasa Iyengar conveys his indebtedness to N. Kotisvara Iyer for helping him with the Varnamettu-s (musical structure) of the Kirtanas. Therefore this version seems to be quite old and traditional.

Dravida Ganam contains six Kirtanas of Muttutandavar and five of Marimutta Pillai in notation, adhering to the same Raga and Tala given in the publication of 1905. Upto early 1930's the Varnamettu seemed to have been intact.

In 1943, Ragas of some songs were changed when Annamalai University published the *Tamil Isai Padal* series. Tiruppamburam Swaminatha Pillai was entrusted with tuning and

notating the compositions. It is in this book that we find *Sevikka vendum* set to Abhogi which has come to stay. However there is also a version being rendered in Andolika.

Another special feature regarding the text of the song *Sevikka vendum* is the composer's ability to bring out the beautiful description of the deities, the various shrines and the important festivals which have been depicted in the song.

After saying that one should worship at Chidambaram in the Pallavi, in the Charanas he guides us as to how a devotee should do this. "*Aindukarattanai Mukkurunivinayakar*". Lord Muruga are all enshrined in the area of the West Gopura entrance, which he mentions in the first Charana. In the next he says one has to take a dip at the Siva Ganga and come to Sivakami Sannidhi and do a Pradakshana as to how the devotees and the Siddhas have done. In the next Charana he praises Lord Ambalavana and in the last Charana he mentions the important festival and describes the four Gopurams, the streets where the Tillai Muvayiravar reside, the Tirumanjanam and the Margazhi Tiruvadira festivals.

The Madhyamakala Sahitya is called *Muduku* in Tamil. In the *Tevarams* of Sambandar *Idarinum*, *Madarmadappidiyum* are full of such embellishments. In the Kirtana *Darisittalavil* of Muttutandavar we find such an example.

*Mayanai anda upayanai
malaimagal neyanai azhivillakayanai
Tuyanai vaibhogarayanai
nalvedavayanai Tandavarayanai sivayanai.*

Darisittalavil was originally (1905) rendered in Karnatakasarangam, (Eka Talam) and in the Annamalai publication it is tuned to Latangi in Jhampa Tala in which it is now popularly rendered. Out of the very compositions in Latangi this is a good classical Kirtana in Tamil. The Madhayamakala setting enhances the richness of the song.

He has also used the *Irattaikilavi*, another feature in Tamil poetry, in *Ananda Tandavam*

*Pada Cilambu Kalir Kalir Kalir ena
Paimporkuzhaigal Palir Palir Palir ena.*

One cannot but remember Nilakanta Sivan's "*Ananda Natamaduvur Tillai*"

*Padimadi joti palir palir ena
Pada Chilamboli kalir kalir ena*

Muttutandavar's virtuosity in Jati and Tala comes out well in the following song in Vasanta (Misra Chapu) where Jati syllables have been beautifully incorporated into the text of the song.

Pallavi

*Niruttam seidare aiyan
Sadananda*

Anupallavi

*Tiruttamana mandrul Sivacitambara nadar
Tittimi dimidimi dikkita
dikkita tiku tattimi
dimitat tatinginatomena*

Arunagirinatha has used many such Jati syllables. Tandavar could have been inspired by the Chandappavala Peruman Arunagiri. In the Kirtana *Adiya Vedikkai Parir* (Todi-Chapu Tala) the four Charanas are almost made up of quite lengthy Jati syllables.

Another very interesting feature in this finishing Jati pattern in the Charanas, Tadinginatom, occurring

thrice. This justifies that this sort of 'Arudi' was present as early as 16th century and probably Muttutandavar was first to use this. Besides the sequence tapered in Gopuchcha (cow's tail) yati-form before concluding with three Tadinginathoms.

The opening lines of the Charanam are excellently worded with Antyaprasa or Monai (Demonstration)

The term Jati is used here as Sati. In Sambandar's *Tevaram* there is a form called Tiruttalasati which can be rendered in Tisra; Khanda, and Misra Nadai-s.

Though there are many Padams composed by Muttutandavar the one popular is '*Teruvil varano*', depicting 'Bhavani Kadal' where the Nayaki is waiting to see the Lord's procession. This concept has been expanded into Kuravanji Natakas.

The Nayaki is waiting at her door step, to see the Lord coming in procession to her street.

*Teruvil varano ennai satre Tirambi Parano
She is pining to have him give a special glance and say a word just meant for her.*

*Vasal mun nillano
enakkoru vachakam sollano*

She very much wants him to stop at her door step and speak to her alone.

The Charana describes her restlessness and helplessness bringing out the pangs of separation.

*Podu povadillaiye enakkoru
tuda solvar illaiye*

The 1905 publication mentions the Raga for this Padam as Sourashtra set to Adi Tala. But today it is rendered in Khamas-Rupakam. The concept of Bridal mysticism or songs sung in the Nayaka-Nayaki Bhava in Tamil is found in early *Aham* poetry during the Sangam period. In *Tevaram* we have songs like *Chiraiyarum Madakkiliye-Ingeva* of

Jnanasambandar, *Sonmalai payilvinra, munnam Avanudaiya Tiruthandavam* of Tirunavukkarasar, many songs of Manikkavachagar, Andal and others. again it is important to note that such Srinagara Padams were first composed by Muttutandavar with the Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanas in Tamil. Both the text and the music are full of classicism and Bhava. This composition is a favourite among dancers, which provides ample scope for Abhinaya.

Marimutta Pillai (1712 - 1787)

Tillaividangan is a village situated to the north east of Chidambaram. There lived a pious devotee named Deivangal Perumal Pillai. His son was Marimutta Pillai. From his very young age he had a flair for composing songs in praise of Lord Nataraja. Marimutta Pillai had three sons. The eldest, Deivangal Perumal Pillai and the third Kumarasami Pillai were Tamil Pandits. When Deivangal Perumal Pillai was only twelve years old he composed a Prabandha named *Umayaval Malai* in praise of the Goddess at Chidambaram. After completing this he forgot about his family and roamed the streets without any worldly desires. The father Marimutta Pillai was pained at the state of his son and daily prayed to the Lord Ambalavana to bring his son back to his normal self. One day after the Ardhajama Puja when Marimutta Pillai went to sleep Lord Siva appeared in his dream as a Saivite nobleman and asked him to sing a Prabandham on Chidambaram and be freed of his mental anguish. When he woke up he was overjoyed at the command of the Lord. He composed the *Puliyur Venba* and his

son was back to his normal self, and hailed the Lord's command in the introduction, *Iyan Sabinātan* . . .

Marimutta Pillai also composed the *Chidambaresar Viralividu Tudu, Varunapuri Adimulisar Kuravanji, Adimulisar Nondi Natakam, Anidhinatakam, Puliyur Singaravelar Padiyam, Vidangesar Padikam*, and fifty songs in praise of Nataraja, many Chitrakavis such as Nagabandhanam and Ratnabandhanam, many Vannams and other Kirtanas. But out of the 50 odd Kirtanas we have only 25 today. Marimutta Pillai's songs in praise of Lord Nataraja are descriptive and he has adopted the style of *Ninda stuti* also. Here the praise is indirect, and he appears to tease Him or even mildly abuse Him in a playful manner. Some are in Nayaka-Nayaki Bhava similar to the Padams of Muttutandavar.

Like Muttutandavar's, Marimutta Pillai's compositions were also printed in 1905. As already noted, only text with Raga and Tala are given in that publication. In 1945 Annamalai University authorities published the songs with notation. These have been set to tune by Tiruppamburam Swaminatha Pillai and T. N. Sivasubramanya Pillai. The ragas of the earlier publication are therefore different from the latter, for example :

1. Tillai Chidambaram- Anandabhairavi - Adi
- Kapinarayani - Adi
2. Darisittaperai - Sourashtra - Adi
- Gandharva Manohari - Rupaka

But however Ragas of popular compositions like *Orukkal Sivasidambaram* (Arabhi), *Kalaittookki* (Yadukulakambhoji) and *Edukkittanai modi* (Surutti) have not been changed.

Pillai's Kirtanas have either two or three Charanas. They abound in Edugai, second letter rhyme or Dvitiyakshara prasa.

Pallavi

- (1) *Tillai Chidambaram allamal
Verillai sundandirame
Sollukkelidu nenje Solluvai Sivakama
Vallikkanpula Sabhai . . .*

Pallavi

- (2) *Deivika sthalam
Vaibhokamengum*

Anupallavi

- Tuuyavedanum malum
seyya tamarai*
- (3) *Orukkal Sivasidambaram
irukkadul vinaiye*
- (4) *Innam vayiram
enna karanam*

Marimutta Pillai was single-minded in his devotion to the Lord of Tillai. He refers to this shrine as the best in many of his compositions.

1. *Tillai Chidambaram allal verillai sudantirame*
2. *Darisittaperai parisuttaraka
Chidambaramadriyundo*
3. *Devikastalam inta Tillai
indavaibhogamengum illai*
4. *Endattalattaiyum inda talattukkinai
sollakkudate*
5. *Orukkal Sivasidambaram enru sonnal
irukkadul vinaiye*

Chidambaram is the most sacred to the Saivites as Srirangam is to the Vaishnavites. The term 'Koyil' in the Saivite tradition refers only to Chidambaram, though today it is used generally for any temple.

In the song *Parantanai* (Mohana) he refers to the three Pulaiya devotees, Nandan, Tillai Vettiyan and Pettran Samban, who belonged to the low caste and became 'pure' at this sacred shrine:

*Sadiyil inamulla pulaiyar
muvar itir tanit taniye punidarahinar*

The song "*Ennapizhaippu*" was originally composed in Saurashtram but later notation is in Velavali, a Janya raga of the 23rd Mela Gaurimanohari. This is a fine example of the Nindastuti. In the Charanas the composer refers to many episodes figuring in the *Tiruvilayadar Puranam*. This composition has the Madhyama Kala Sahitya in the Charana.

In another Kirtana the composer inquires the reason as to why the Lord is always seen with the lifted leg. Here he questions: is it because of your fight with the Lord Yama or because you trampled the moon, or is it that the poison in your neck has gone down to your leg or may be it is due to the dancing to please Patanjali and Vyagrapada referred to as Puli and Pambu meaning the tiger and the snake respectively.

This composition in Todi is a classic piece which is equally rich in its text and musical content. Set to 2 Kalai Adi Tala, the rendering in slow tempo helps bring out all the fine nuances of Todi.

Unlike Music Trinity's compositions, one rarely comes across 2-Kalai Adi Tala Kirtanas in Tamil compositions, entitling them to "main item" in concert. This Todi Kirtana certainly deserves such treatment as regards Raga, musical structure, text and mood of the song.

While comparing Muttutandavar and Marimutta Pillai, one finds that both have composed Kirtanas, Padams (some in Ninda Stuti) - mostly on Lord Nataraja. Strange that Muttutandavar

sang only in praise of Lord of Tillai although it was the Goddess who blessed him to become a composer and no song for her! Or were they lost? Marimutta Pillai has, however, a song on Goddess Sivakami in Bhairavi :

*Eninda parakku Ezhai medil
Unakku enna vanmamo Amma*

Among other songs, *Edukkittanai modi* (Surutti) though listed as Kirtana in 1905 publication is popularly rendered as Padam. And in this publication only *Enna Kariyattukku Inda Peyandimel/ Ichchai Kondai Magale*, (a mother chiding her daughter - a Ninda Stuti) is listed as Padam.

Surrendering to the divine feet of the Lord and singing the praise of the Pada is an important aspect of Bhakti for many composers and Muttutandavar has sung 6 such Kirtanas. *Unpadametunai* (Paraz), *Santatam un pada sevai* (Sourashtra), *Pada darisanam* (Ananda Bhairavi), *Arar asaippadar nin padattukku* (Nadanamakriya), *Sundarakuncitapada* (Ananda Bhairavi), *Tookiya Tiruvadi* (Ananda Bhairavi).

Arunachala Kavirayar (1712-1779)

In Tanjore district there is a village called Tillaiyadi near Mayavaram. Here lived Nallatambi Pillai. Early in his life he was drawn towards Jainism but later came back to the Saivite fold. He had four sons and the fourth was Arunchala Kavi. When Arunachala was twelve years old he had mastered most of the reading material taught in the school. He also had a natural talent for music. As he lost his parents at a young age the

elder brothers took care of him. He later went to the Dharmapuram Mutt and learnt from the scholars, Tamil Grammar and Literature; and also learnt Sanskrit. The Chief Pontiff Ambalvana Kavirayar was his teacher who even offered him to take up the headship of the Mutt. But Kavirayar desired to lead a householder's life and wanted to continue learning. He stayed at the Mutt for twelve years. He chose money-lending as his profession which, he felt, would provide him enough time to read books, and continue his literary pursuits. The two works which greatly influenced him were the *Tirukkural* and the *Kambaramayanam*.

As time passed Kavirayar started giving Ramayana discourses and taught many aspirants. Once, he left for Pondicherry and on his way stayed at Sirkazhi, at the branch of the Dharmapuram Mutt. One Chidambaram Pillai, his fellow student, was the head of the Mutt. The latter had started to write a *Pallu Prabandham* on Sirkazhi which was incomplete and requested Kavirayar to complete staying at Sirkazhi. Kavirayar completed the *Prabandham* that very night and left for Puduval promising to come back while returning. Highly pleased by his work the Head of the Mutt made arrangements for Kavirayar's stay at Sirkazhi with his family. When Kavirayar returned he agreed to this proposition, and made Sirkazhi his home. From then on he was known as Sirkazhi Arunachala Kavirayar.

While at Sirkazhi he composed many Kirtanas, *Ajomukhi Nataka*, *Sirkazhi Talapuramam*, *Sirkazhi Kovai* and *Anumar Pillai Tamil*. During this time

from the nearby Sattanadapuram came Venkataramaiyyar and Kondandarama Iyer to learn a few *Prabandhas* from Kavirayar in Tamil. They also studied the *Kambaramayanam*. They requested him to write the Ramayanam in the form of Kirtanas. Kavirayar started composing the Ramayana in the form of Kirtanas, Viruttam and Kanni. These two disciples went to many places, sang these compositions, and Kavirayar's work received popularity throughout Tamil Nadu.

He named the work as '*Rama Nataka Kirtanai*'. He was the first to create such a work, that is an epic, a "Sangita Natakam", in Kirtana form in Tamil. A story written in a dramatic style in the form of Kirtanai was started by Kavirayar. This was later followed by Gopalakrishna Bharati who wrote the *Nandanar Charitra Kirtanai*. It should be noted that they have named their works as "Kirtanai" giving importance to the musical form. In Ramanataka there are 258 Kirtanas and 278 poetic forms.

The concept of Saranagati (complete surrender to the Lord) is very important in Vaishnava tradition. A song in Ramanataka clearly depicts this. Lord Rama says that "when I do not protect Vibhishana who has surrendered I will become just equal to grass bereft of any human quality".

"Kavadu vittal trinam allavo Nandane"

The dramatic element comes out well in the last line of the song where a dialogue is interwoven commanding Sugriva to fetch Vibhishana.

"Azhaittu va po ni Sugriva".

Sangita Kalanidhi Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar revived some of the Ramayana Kirtanas by setting music to around 50 songs, which were published by *Sudesamitran* in 1946.

Rama Natakam closely follows the *Kambaramayanam* and contains the Balakandam, Aranya, Kishkinta, Sundara and Yuddha Kandams. Apart from the Kirtanas, metrical forms like Venba, Kocchaka Kalippa, Kalitturai and Viruttam are seen interwoven.

The Venba is normally rendered, in Sankarabharanam or the Pann Pazham Panchuram. The following is an invocation to Lord Vignesvara, which is a Venba.

Anai mugane Aranar Tirumagane
Senaiyar Kanaga Valanchevone - Gnaname
Natakaththaik konda Unran Nallarulale - Rama
Natakaththaich cholluven Naan.

The following is an example of a Viruttam where Sugriva is said to be cheering up Lord Rama.

Inda vidamaga Ramach
Chandiran manam nogum velai
Tondam ulla Sugriva
nuntunivu cheppuvane.

The Oradi Kirtanai are descriptive in nature. These figure only in Isai Natakams. These are similar to Darus or story songs. There is a Ramayana Oradi Kirtanai composed by Kavirayar which serves as an introduction, '*Kondandadiksha Guruve*' in Todi, (Adi). It starts with praising Hanuman and depicts Rama's birth, and gives the various Kanda-s in a nutshell and concludes with the Pattabhishekam. Each section of this song is later expanded into the story. This is similar

to the Nondicindu '*Palana maruganiyum*' of Gopalakrishna Bharati.

The Ragas used in *Rama Natakam* are : Saveri, Asaveri, Mohanam, Kalyani, Todi, Sankarabharanam, Sourashtram, Madhyamavati, Anandabhairavi, Nilambari, Suruti and many other Rakti ragas. Rare ragas like Saindavi, Mangalakausikam are also used. Most of the songs are in Adi Tala and a few are in Rupaka and Chapu. The well known songs popularly rendered, are *Yaro ivar Yaro*, *En palli kondir Ayya*, *Charanam Charanam*, *Enakkun irupadam*, *Yarendru Raghavanai*, *Andarama Soundarayam*, *Kanavendum Laksham Kangal*, *Deviyival Rama*, *Ramanukku mannan mudi*, *Kanden Kanden*, *Anumane etc.* *Annai Janaki Vandale*, *Kanti Vandale* are all good examples of Patra Pravesa Darus that is the entry song of important characters. Varnanai Daru is descriptive. *Andaramasoundarya*, *Kanavendum* are good examples. There are a few Samvada Darus that is conversation between two characters.

1. Balakandam - Rama and Parasurama
- Mannil Arasar - Kalyani - Adi
2. Ayodhya Kandam - Kaikeyi, Dasaratha
- Inda Alangolamum - Nilambari - Adi
3. Aranya Kandam - Rama and Surpanaka
- Sembavala - Mohanam - Adi
4. Aranyakandam - Sita and Ravana
- Varum endravudane - Arabhi - Adi

Svagata Daru - welcoming song
Yaro ivar Yaro, Pralapa Daru lamenting,
Chinnam Chiru, (Dasarata on Rama-Ghanta), *Aiyaiyo Raghurama* (Kosalai on Rama-Mukhari). The Pattabhisheka Daru *Makutam Kondane* in Suruti are other examples.

The following Kirtanas have retained the original tunes.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---|-------|
| 1. Andarama Saundaryam - | Kedaragoula | - | Adi |
| 2. Kanavendum | - Suratti | - | Chapu |
| 3. Parabramma Sorupane | - Goulipantu | - | Adi |
| 4. Eppadimanam | - Useni | - | Chapu |
| 5. Chararam | - Sourashtram | - | Chapu |
| 6. Charanam | - Asaveri | - | Chapu |
| 7. Inge irunganum | - Kalyani | - | Adi |
| 8. Akkini Bhagavane | - Ananda Bhairavi- | - | Adi |

The songs which have been changed from their original tunes.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| | Then | Now | Now | Then |
| 1. Yaro ivar yaro | -Saveri | Bhairavi | -Adi | Adi |
| 2. Kanden Kanden | -Mukhari | Vasanta | Bagesri | -Adi Chapu |
| 3. Annai Janaki | -Saveri | Bhupalam | -Adi | Adi |
| 4. Arivar yar | -Bhairavi | Mukhari | - Chapu | Chapu |
| 5. Arendru | -Bhairavi | Yadukula | Kambhoji- | Adi Adi |

These Kirtanas figuring in Sangita Natakas are called Daru though they are generally known as Kirtanas as per their

structure, but content-wise they are part of a story, whereas the Kirtanas of the other two composers are in praise of the Lord, (Kirti). Apart from the *Rama Nataka* Kirtanai, a magnificent contribution, there is also a Kirtana in praise of the Lord of Tillai composed by Arunachala Kavi.

With so many excellent compositions available in Tamil which were popular prior to the Sangita Mummurti it is a pity that most of them are confined to the books alone, yet to see the light of the day. It is time that efforts were taken to render them in concerts and preserve them in audio format with all the technological facilities available today, with the available notation and not changing the tunes again and again. A composition can never survive with multiple tunes.

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PADAS OF MAHARAJA SWATI TIRUNAL

By V. Rajagopal

The Padas are mainly used for dancing. The concept of '*Madhura Bhakti*' and '*Nayaka-Nayaki*' bhava in all their ramified aspects, provided the requisite background for the development of the musical form - '*Padas*'. The sentiment depicted in the Padas is "*Sringara*" ie., love which gives wide range of scope to the dancers with its variations and gradations, its refinement and subtleties. On account of its beautiful 'dhatu' (sahitya) these compositions are invariably sung in music concerts.

The contribution of Maharaja Swati Tirunal to this form of composition deserves special attention for its quality. He has composed 66 Padas - five in Telugu, eleven in Sanskrit and fifty in Malayalam. They are composed in thirty three different Ragas. Atana, Anandabhairavi, Dwijavanti, Kalyani, Kambhoji, Kedaram, Kurinji, Navarasam, Nadanamakriya, Nilambari, Sankarabharanam, Saveri, Sahana, Suruti and Yadukulakambhoji are liberally tuned for these Padas.

The Padas are composed like the nayika addressing the nayaka through her Sakhi; the nayika addressing the lord directly and the Sakhi responding to the nayika. A few Padas which are very popular have been chosen for the limited purpose of this article.

1. *Ali Venil Enthu cheivu* --- Kurinji --- Misrachapu

In this Pada, the nayika expresses her feeling of loneliness to her Sakhi and requests her to go to Lord Padmanabha and ask Him to put an end to the misery

of separation. She also asks whether He has forgotten the sweet words uttered by Him while he was a companion to her.

*'kamannenodu munnum kamakaliyil ororo
sumadura vachanangal chonnathum
marunnu poyo?'*

2. *Hema bhasuraanganakumen* --- Yadukulakambhoji --- Jampa

The nayika puts several questions to her Sakhi, asking when would all her ambitions be fulfilled? The beautiful embellishments with the words '*ennu theerthidunnu*' repeatedly at the end of every step is interesting and enchanting. Another peculiar feature of this Pada is that it has no 'Anupallavi'.

3. *Alarsara Paritapam* ----- Suruti ----- Misrachapu

The tone of disappointment on account of His failure to turn up even after a long wait is expressive in this Pada. Even the bed of flowers were not soothing, in His absence. This Pada is usually sung starting with '*Jalajabhandumiha Jaladhiyil Annayunnu*' in Anupallavi, unfolding straightaway the disappointment and longing.

4. *Kintu chaivu jnaninna ho keeravaani sakhi* --- Kalyani --- Adi

Here the nayika complains to her sakhi that, being under the influence of the bonded love of somebody else, Lord Padmanabha does not respond to her feelings, forgetting the simple truth that His supreme being heeds to the call of all devotees. She has lost her sleep and

the most fragrant flowers become a painful object for her.

'Surabhikalam Kusumangal
Soochikulam athupole'.

5. **Kaanthanodu chennu melle -----**
Neelambari ----- Roopaka

The nayika requests her sakhi to meet Sri Padmanabha and impresses upon Him her miserable plight and bring Him home to liberate her from pain. One may be reminded of the Sringeri rasa bhava of Gopis for Lord Krishna towards the end of the last charana of the Pada.

'Valayunnathun orka nee
valabhidhadhi suranathanaam
vasudevasudan varum enniha'

6. **Taruni jnanentu cheivu ----**
Dwijavanti ---Misrachapu

The nayika is afraid of whether her sweetheart has forgotten her "Who else is there to hear my grievances and protect me, Oh! Sri Padmanabha".

'Sarasamanaaki oru Kanavan
alatharu enikku avalambam'

7. **Kaantha tava pizha jnan enthu
cheithen? ---- Atana ---- Adi**

The nayika asks her nayaka "What sin have I committed to keep me away from you?" Even the full moon and the cool breeze make me uncomfortable in your absence.

'Thingalum uyarnnu vannu
chenkkanal chorinjeedunnu'

The feelings expressed here are quite conventional but still they are charming and vividly expounding the love in separation (Vipralamba).

8. **Poonthen ner mozhi sakhi ----**
Aanandabhairavi --- Adi

It is the best example of musical embellishments His Highness has infused in his compositions. It is par-excellence for its poetic value with its monai and prasa.

'Baale charu seeie
chaale vanneniha rathri
kaale modathaal ennude
phale nal kasturika alepanam cheiyyum?'

9. **Pannagendra sayana Sree
Padmanabha ----- Raagamalika -----**
Roopaka

It is a Sanskrit Pada in which the nayika addresses Sri Padmanabha directly requesting Him to give up His anger and accept her. It has eight stanzas set to eight melodious Ragas most suitable for the appropriate time for each Raga to be sung conventionally - Sankarabharanam, Kambhoji, Neelambari, Bhairavi, Todi, Suruti, Nadanamakriya and Bhoopalam. Each stanza has Chittaswara, which from the second onwards is articulated to Sankarabharanam. In the last part, the Swaras are more in the reverse order(viloma) commencing from Bhoopalam and ending in Sankarabharanam. This Pada is quite commonly used by dancers.

Maharaja Swati Tirunal occupies a prominent place among the composers in India. He has composed variety of songs both in Karnatic and Hindustani music. The connoisseurs of music are always enjoying the music of Swati Tirunal.

ROLE OF SABHAS*

By S. Seshadri

At the outset, I think I can take liberty to give an exposition on the "Role of Sabhas" at this Symposium in the context of my oncoming "Shashtiabdapoorthy" of service two years hence to the cause of Fine Arts starting from 1943 in this very great metropolis of Mumbai.

What I believe and practise in my day to-day life is, as heirs to a rich cultural heritage and diversified tradition, we should religiously preserve, protect, enhance and enrich the inheritance as culture is not a stagnant pool but a flowing stream.

How to foster, enhance and enrich this?

1. By promoting, propagating Music, Literature on Music, Dance, Drama, Harikatha and other allied Fine Arts in all forms, the first step towards which is education, establishing music school or college.
2. By organising and/or conducting Seminars/Symposia, concerts, competitions, Lecture - Demonstrations, Film Shows, Music Festivals - and providing facilities for advancement of such education, publication and libraries etc.
3. Awarding of scholarships, freeships, stipends, prizes and other modes of such education, publication and libraries etc.
4. By undertaking and promoting scientific research for extension of knowledge in various facets of Indian Music.

All these things were fostered and patronised by Maharajas, Nawabs, Zamindars and others keeping alive the development of the Art until the first half of the last century. The mantle of "Patron" had fallen off the shoulders of a powerful few and had landed on the not so powerful public at large.

A distinguishing feature of Indians in general and the South Indian community in particular is their love for the traditional Arts. Wherever they are, they are motivated with the objective of preserving, propagating their heritage of arts and catering to the cultural needs and education of people at large and launch Sabhas and Art Societies. The South Indian settled in Mumbai in 1920s chose Matunga, the Mini Madras, as a centre for fostering Indian Music. The very first Sangeetha Sabha was founded in 1927 by great music lovers like S/Shri K. S. Ramachandra Iyer, A. C. Ramalingam Pillai, R. S. Mani, Raghunatha Patrachariar, K. S. N. Sarma, Dr. S. S. Krishnan among others and programmes were conducted in SIES Hall.

The second to come up was Sri Krishna Gana Sabha founded in the year 1943 by S/Shri G. Varada Iyer (grandfather of Ghazal Maestro Shri A. Hariharan), P. R. Sundararaja Iyengar, and yours truly. Gearing up a membership of 1000 the Sabha organised Music performances and Music Festivals. Festivals were conducted for the first time in Bombay in the Podar College Hall and lawns. However, after a few years it had to be folded up on account of financial losses. The Indian Fine Arts Society, founded by Capt. Krishnan, S. Sarangan and others of General Motors Group in the mid-40s started conducting periodical programmes in Don Bosco School Hall.

* Paper presented at the "Music Symposium - 2001" held on September 8th & 9th, 2001.

The parent "Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha" was born in 1943/44, the Founders being S/Shri D. K. Subramanian, T. V. Doreswamy, K. S. Mahadevan, T. N. P. Easwar and others and was organising regular monthly concerts in SIES School Hall.

Those were the hard days. Despite this, these three organisations were vying with each other to promote Indian Music by organising regular music programmes by great maestros of the day to their members in the range of 400 to 500 and to the Music lovers in general. The second line of artistes and up-and-coming talents were only a few then and the Sabha spared no efforts to promote



Shri S. Seshadri

them as well in their drive to promote Music. The remuneration paid to stalwarts those days was just a pittance. Later in 1951-52 some of the Committee men of these Sabhas forming themselves into a think-tank felt the dire need to amalgamate the three Organisations whose objectives, concern and interest were similar, into one unit in order to achieve organisational economy and efficiency, to provide meaningful

programmes to a much larger number of Members and Rasikas under one Banner and one roof. Thus was born Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha in September 1952 at the Podar College Hall in Matunga. The brain behind this being Prof. T. V. Ramanujam, S/Shri R. S. Mani, B. Narayanaswamy, K. S. Mahadevan, T. N. P. Easwar, S. R. Kasturi and yours truly, among others. With the merger the membership rose to 1500 and gradually swelled to 6000 with the application of the Sabha's dictum "maximum benefit at a minimum cost" with membership fees just at Rs. 2.50 per member for I class, Rs. 1.50 for II class and life member at Rs. 250/-. The advent of

Shanmukhananda Hall with a capacity of 3012 seats, and the Sabha with a built-in massive membership of 6000, thanks to the dedicated drive of ticket volunteers in enrolling members, necessitated the conducting of regular monthly programmes during the second weekend and Annual Festivals of Music-Dance-Drama for two consecutive days by the same artistes with no repetition of repertoire presented the previous day.

The Shanmukhananda Sabha had gone to places like Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Coimbatore in fulfilment of its objectives organising Festivals of Music-Dance-Drama which earned good dividends both for arts and for the Sabha exchequer. It should be written in letters of gold for the Sabha and the Hall having been brought back to life (after the disastrous fire in 1990) and restored to its original glory by a team of committed and dedicated committee men and trustees under the dynamic and charismatic leadership of Dr. V. Subramanian to serve eternally the cause of our cultural heritage. That is not all.

Starting of the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya in 1956 with six students brought by the founder - Principal Shri Chellamani Bhagavathar (father of Ghazal singer A. Hariharan) was a significant development of the Shanmukhananda Sabha to impart education in music to members, their children and to the public at large. The Vidyalaya has with excellent faculty, in course of years, turned out star performers in both vocal and instrumental music in Carnatic system. Teaching Hindustani Music has also been added in due course. Eminent Nadopasaka, Sangita Kalanidhi Prof. K. S. Narayanaswamy headed the Vidyalaya for a number of years, under whom many faculties, including Hindustani instrumental and Diploma Course (KVC) of the University of Mumbai were started. He had initiated and conducted Music Appreciation Classes too. At present the Vidyalaya is headed by the eminent musicologist, music commentator, singer and critic Dr.

Sulochana Rajendran, under whose leadership some more faculties have been added in Carnatic and Hindustani streams and with eminent teachers, the Vidyalaya has gained in strength and quality in imparting training to around 600 students. This Vidyalaya is the only Institution recognised by the University of Mumbai for the 2-year Diploma Course (KVC). Plans are afoot to have Diploma Course for Instrumental Music as well as upgrading to Degree course.

As part of continuing music education and with a view to bringing out the latent talent in students, the Vidyalaya periodically holds "Talent Exposure Concerts". This helps kindle the performing instincts and aptitude of the students apart from helping eliminate stage fright, and also impels a compulsory Sadhaka.

It also keeps the faculty interestingly engaged on a three-pronged progress - in teaching, learning and presenting before the public. Many of the students graduated from the Vidyalaya and settled in various parts of the country and abroad are spreading the message of Divine Music learnt by conducting music schools/ classes. Some have graduated to the performing forum, through the "Talent Promotion Concerts" organised by the Sabha. Annual Music competitions have been a regular feature in Shanmukhananda since 1954. The competition normally attracts over 200 candidates and the Sabha awards prizes and scholarships instituted by Music lovers. The winners have gone places.

The most significant role being played over the years by the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts &

Sangeetha Sabha as harbinger of such events is to scout for and spot latent talents and up-and-coming artistes from all over the country and present them in the prestigious Shanmukhananda platform under the banner of Talent Promotion Festival. Out of 200 such main artistes so presented without repetition, a sizeable number are in shining colours in the performing arena throughout the country and abroad, of course, developing their talents further in the interveing period. The year 1953 saw the birth of the Bharatiya Music & Arts Society in Matunga.

With the migration of our brethren to the vast suburbs of Mumbai, there came with similar objectives over a period of years, Fine Arts Society, Chembur, Mulund Fine Arts, Dombivli Fine Arts, Music Triangle in Santacruz, Gana Kala Vidya Nilayam in Goregaon, Bhandup Fine Arts, Rasika Ranjani Sabha in Ghatkopar, Nadhabrahmam, Nadha-Anjali in Chembur, Nadalaya in Andheri, Kala Kendra in Thane and Vashi Fine Arts. All of them are doing exceedingly well and in an exemplified manner for the cause of Divine Music and other Arts with Music Schools attached and regular Music concerts/Seminars/Lecture Demonstrations conducted, of course, with their own limitations- Shanmukhananda or for that matter I believe Fine Arts Society, is no exception in the face of the Artistes demand for fabulous remuneration. The Sabhas have to work perforce with the funds available and possibly with sponsorship, display of Banners etc. But Sabhas cannot always bank on sponsorships, etc. Therefore the panacea for this is to

prevail upon Artistes to accept the reasonable remuneration generally offered by Sabhas from time to time depending on the Indian economy. It is more to the advantage of artistes as also to the Sabhas, tie-up arrangements between two or more organisations for concerts on different days are being arranged.

Another area in which the cultural institutions can exercise their mind is to bring out a periodical publication of research-oriented, scholarly magazine like "SHANMUKHA" published by the Shanmukhananda Sabha and also a library.

In conclusion, I would like to state that there is a marked decline in the exposure of villagers to traditional classical music. Temples starved of funds no more can organise concerts unless artistes voluntarily come forward to give free performances. Here the Sabhas can step in and organise good educative, elevating concerts at various temples during the Brahmotsavams or Kalyana Utsavams, Kumbhabhishekams, etc., based on the Sthalapurana Kritis, thematic repertoire. Besides top-notch artistes, youngsters specialising in Vaggeyakaras could be presented. In fact, this could be an encouraging gesture for the organising Sabha - run Sangeetha Vidyalayas to do research and compile a Margam or repertoire and present their talented students. Shanmukhananda is prepared to venture on this new education as also conduct music appreciation workshops at various centres provided sponsors come forward to help financially.

Shanmukhananda has a plan embarking on a Manodharmic Yatra in before it for consideration to launch Sangita Siksha and delving deep into the Music Therapy commended and Nidhi which will surface, I am sure the prepared by Shri 'Garland' Rajagopalan; participants and the rasikas assembled the Shanmukhananda Medical Centre in the Shanmukhananda may take it under its wings. By Chandrasekarendra Saraswati organising the present Symposium on Auditorium will find the deliberations the 8th and 9th of September 2001, useful, enlightening and rewarding.



OBITUARY

We record with deep regret the news received at the time of going to the press, of the sad demise at Chennai of Kalaimamani S. R. Kasturi, one of the founding members of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha. His service to the Sabha and to the promotion of fine arts for over four decades in various capacities as a Member of the Managing Committee till he shifted to Chennai, to continue there what he left in Mumbai, speaks volumes of the man and the mission he had.

The octogenarian patron of fine arts was an actor-musician of great merit. Founding the Matunga Dramatic Society, he gave boost to the art of drama too. Mention must be made to the two musical plays, "*Saint Tyagaraja*" and "*Purandaradasa*" he produced himself playing the lead roles of the bards and singing with relish and reticence.

SHANMUKHA pays its tribute to the veteran artiste and prays that his soul may rest in peace.

From the Archives

CLASSICAL MUSIC & FILM MUSIC By Vasant Desai

The observations which I wish to seek with your kind permission are based on the varied experience I have been fortunate to gather in the field of classical and film music during the last 25 years*. I do not know if in my quest I have always taken the right course. As such I may be wrong in what I say. But I wish to assure you that my intention is not to show disrespect to any individual, *gharana* or *gayaki*. Even if the view that films have done considerable harm to classical music is accepted, credit should be given to the film music for the great service it has rendered not only by delivering the sadly moaning music from the four walls of the places where it had been interred, but also by securing for it the hospitable havens of the ordinary folk.

Not more than 10 years ago Ragdari Sangeet, Bhajan, Qawwali, Ghazal, Lavani, Natak ka Pad and the like were mere words for moffusil places. Today, however, all the corners, and the humblest of hamlets of India, are resounding with music technicalities, through the invaluable service of musical films.

Excess of anything can have a depreciating effect; in the case of music, its increasing comprehensibility and availability has resulted in almost everyone claiming competence in this art. Anyone who is acquainted with the black and white keys of a Harmonium and can manipulate them with some

dexterity, cooks up a new tune by combining it from here and there and his work passes under the name of novelty. If luck supports him, his market rate goes up and his popularity is followed by a great deal of commotion, everyone complaining that classical music is being stifled to death by the Films.

Let us now try to peep behind the cloud of such meaningless anxiety and study the situation in classical music, the *Pancham Veda*, from the time of the first film song up to date.

Determining the origin of classical music is as tedious a task as tracing the geneology of a *Rishi* or a river. Our great music originated from 'Om' uttered by Siva-the sound 'Om' later on was distributed in the *Navarasa*; and the *Sringar Rasa* being the master of its *Mukhakamal*, the rest of the *Rasas* became subordinate to it. The eternal 'Omkar' became the *Fifth Veda* and was known by the name of *Sama*. Before it was described as such the 'Om' *Swaras* were called 'AM'. The fusing of the *Sabda Rishca* 'SA' with the *Swara* 'Am' resulted in the creation of the *Sama* type of music.

"*Gitavadinnrityanam Trayam
Sangeetamuchyate,
Danasyanna Pradhanatwatachcha
Sangitamitiram*".

This shows why one of the three types of music i.e., the vocal music was given the highest place. The reason was that the *Swaras* had been granted the

Sabda. The soothing strains of music are not desirable only to man, they are dear to God also as is proved by what God says to Narada.

"*Naaham Vasami Vaikuntha
Yoginam Hridaye Na Cha.
Madbhakta Yatra Gayanti
Tatra Tishthami Naradah*".

And again in the Gita He says "*Vedanam Samavedosmi*". And so being nurtured subsequently by Bharat Muni, this music came to be known as *Bharatiya Sangeet*.

Filled with the power and grace of the thunder of clouds and the lightning, the depths of the ocean, the chirping of the birds and the sweet sound of flowing brooks, music claimed the domain of the five elements - earth, water, fire, air and the space. *Swaras* began to create rain, light lamps, cure diseases and draw towards itself dumb animals whom even the fear of death could not stop.

One wonders if music as wonderful as this can really be swallowed up by the music of films. Film music is, as a matter of fact, only a very small particle of the heavy diamond of classical music. To charge it with the serious crime of swallowing up classical music is as childish as accusing the stars of robbing the moon of its light. The fact, however, remains that Kohinoor of classical music has grown up today and those responsible for this development are, in my opinion, the same who worship it.

Our classical music once had unlimited capacity of creative improvisation, but a time came when the treasures of our temple of music closed door to us, because we had become

slaves of a foreign power and our eyes had been dimmed by a false glamour.

The progress of music was stopped. Novelty is the life and blood of art. Refused this life source, the lotus of music started to wither away. The four *Banis* of our music, Daguri, Nohari, Khandari and Gaudari turned to four different directions. Shirkers took advantage of this situation and boasting of their particular *gharanas*, managed to hide their ignorance and weaknesses. The compositions of Adarang and Sadarang were repeated and repeated till they were distorted. Concerned only with their material well-being, artistes cared little for creative development of music, considering the needs of the situations. Our ancestors concentrated more on the correctness of the *Ragas* and the purity of *swaras* than on composing words for music. The result was that the scant words, originally meant to be mere support to the *Raga*, came to be taken as great poetry and easily satisfied musicians dwelt on them.

The traditional 'Git Gayaki' was thus imprisoned within the four walls of the royal courts and music lovers were refused access to it. The link of understanding that had held the - artiste and the people together was broken. The artistes who should have been an object of respect, was reduced to the status of an entertainer. The society refused to accommodate the musician, the musician who was the successor to the 'Om' of Siva.

Under the evil shadow of slavery, the growth of the tree of music was stunted. Even traditional musicians did not want their sons to take to music. The

* The article was written in 1958.

fingers which had once played the Tanpura of Tansen, were now engaged in clerical exercises. Half-trained musicians started commercialising their art with the glory of their *Gharana* or *Guru* as their advertisement. Music performances were reduced to physical feats of music. The huge audiences, which were drawn to musical performance by their love for the great music of our ancestors, lost patience even as the musician started to develop the initial *swaras*. The few who would stay on to chew pan and smoke cigarettes while the singer warmed up, would soon leave disappointed. Only half a dozen of the type which wants to show off its knowledge of music, stayed behind with the host and continued to bear the atrocities of the singer with words of praise on their lips.

Such scant audience would enrage the singer. He would say, 'classical music is not everyone's cup of tea. Only the initiated can appreciate it; how can these musicless souls enjoy my performance?' And with these words he would ask permission to present a '*Bijli ki Tan*' in Malhar, craving the indulgence of those present. But before he would produce the lightning *tan* from the clouds of his lips, the audience would burst into a tremendous chorus of applause apparently to curtain off the lightning with which they were being threatened. We can see how in order to save face the singer must have thus restored to telling tall stories and anecdotes about his masters and their past.

The result was, of course, not happy. This kind of classical music came

to be shunned by everyone. The music which could once upon a time attract dumb animals, became distasteful to *mān*. Musicians of the class described above are largely responsible for corrupting classical music. If some useful work has to be done in the field of classical music today, we shall have to give priority to the composition of effective and simple verse. Creation of new *ragas* and new composition in old or new *ragas* is greatly necessary.

Most of the harm done to classical music has been caused by meaningless verse and feelingless musicians. We must not go by the names of the *ragas*. I may take the *Raga Hindol* or *Basant*. For example, *Hindol* obviously means a swing, but if you sing the song of a lover playing the swing for her beloved, or Radha and Krishna enjoying a swing together, your song is bound to fall off the swing. The reason is that the *Swaras* of *Raga Hindol* create an entirely different atmosphere.

There are quite few *Ragas* in our classics which have misleading names. One should always try to get to the heart of the *Raga* finding out what kind of atmosphere its *Arohi* and *Avarohi* would create and what particular words would make its singing effective. If thought is not given to these problems, rendering *Raga Malhar*, for instance, with the *bols* '*Karim nam tero*', would not elicit response from the audience however fine the singer may try. These *bols* are not in harmony with the atmosphere that *Raga Malhar* creates.

In teaching music to young pupils care should be taken to introduce such compositions first which will appeal to the

heart. Music should appeal to the heart primarily. If it has an intellectual appeal, it is only secondary. One should never forget that feeling is the essence of music. It is because people forget this that we find such a sad state of affairs on the art of music. I am reminded of the maestros whom I had heard when I was young. The late Abdul Karim Khan could instantaneously capture his audience by singing compositions like '*Gopala Meri*' '*Piya bin Nahin awat chain*' and '*Jamuna ke tir*'. When he sang his special compositions like '*Pyare de gar lage*' in *Puria Raga*, the audience could not appreciate it fully, since the words did not touch the heart.

On the other hand, *bols* like '*Piya bin Nahin awat chain*' presented to it a living world of emotion and ideas thus preparing it to appreciate the various *tans*, *bols*, *murki*, *khatka*, *meend* as well as the intervening *sargams*. Let us take, for example, the case of a visitor who goes to see the Taj or the Jantar Mantar but the only comment of appreciation he can offer is that the edifice is fine. A peep into the mystery of that astronomical marvel would definitely increase the visitor's enjoyment. The effect created by a proper selection or meaningful words for a song is something unique.

The question would perhaps be asked how the infant is lulled to sleep when it does not understand the words in the lullaby sung by the mother. It is true that the child can understand only the music of the lullaby, but as he grows and learns to understand language a little, even an admonition by the mother in a musical speech is taken easily. Similar doubt can be raised about

instruments, but I shall be restricting myself to songs alone.

Musicologists might like to know how *Ragadari* would be distinguished from *Thumri* and *Dadra* etc., when words became important in both. In my opinion, the *gayaki* which is incomprehensible cannot be good *Ragadari*.

To avoid misunderstanding, I would choose my examples from the great masters of the past. ('*Garva main sang lagi, more mandir ab lo*'), '*Tan man dhan sab varoon*', '*Jhan Jhan Jhan Payal Baje*' and the master-piece '*Banao Batiah*', of the late Aftabe Mousiqi Fayyaz Khan were all high class *Ragadari* songs.) I think success of Khan Saheb Fayyaz Khan depended a great deal on perfect composition and good poetry. A comprehensible piece of poetry enables the performance fully.

As a matter of fact, perfect composition or good poetry alone is not enough. In order to be able to create the desired atmosphere the singer should possess melody and feeling as well as an understanding of poetry. Some musicians concern themselves so much with technique that their singing is rendered feelingless. They fail to produce a distinct effect when switching over from one song to another. Ninety percent of their listeners feel very happy to stay away from the conference where they perform. There is quite a great deal of honey in many of our old compositions, but the threatening bees of *gayaki* that swarm the honey-comb keep music lovers away.

I would like to suggest a beautiful situation in which music can make

wonders. The *Raga* and the composition too are equally beautiful in this case. The last Nawab of Lucknow, known as Wajid Ali Shah alias 'Akhatarpia', is ordered by the Company's Government to abdicate. He calls his people to his Durbar for the last audience, when the appointed time for giving up the throne approaches, he sings '*Babul Mora Naihar Chhooto Jaya*' as his last message to his people singing this composition in Bhairavi and moving his listeners to tears, he leaves the throne.

This situation is enough to create a Jubilee hit. The music director can create a most intense effect of '*Shoka Ras*' by bringing out the best in the music of the Nawab. This composition has been sung time and again but only after late Saigal had introduced it on the screen. Late Rahmat Khan and a few other exceptions are of course there.

Now let us try to see how many ragas has a singer mastered during the period of an year and to what extent has he developed the qualities of melody, expression and poetry. That alone would be a real test. Without these achievements, the most impressive passing out "*parade of musicians*" mounted on the steeds of titles bearing the trade mark of Vidwan or Ustad would only be a "*parade of enemies*" of music.

Turning to film music, I may be allowed to say that the idea that film music is something awful and the sworn enemy of classical music, is thoroughly misconceived. Let us first root out this misconception from our minds. The condition of classical music, as already described, obliged the working musicians to concentrate on creating

music for themselves. Because of their simple tunes and easy comprehensibility and also because of their romantic and exciting poetry, folk music has very soon come to stay.

It is, in a way, only a product of classical music. The little bit of music that had survived the vagaries of the rich and selected few, combined with the beauties of nature to develop a music which beat according to rhythms of nature. The effect of this music was powerful, since it drew upon nature for its strength. Soon this folk music branched off in many directions. Channels of folk song carrying it everywhere and watering every field, very soon produced a whole crop of music for every act of daily life, tradition, custom, ritual and religion. At one time the saints of Maharashtra wielded the shield of folk music to protect religion. It was this very music with all its emotion and power, which gave film music its life-blood. With the advent of the talkie, the producers also introduced songs, since music was the soul of Indian life. Another reason for doing so was that the cinema, being a commercial enterprise, song would definitely bring more money than mere dialogue irrespective of the fact whether it fitted in the story well or not.

The last 25 years have seen many improvements in the field of cinema but the barriers which keep music aloof have not yet been crossed. The Ustads who were invited to create music for films were masters in the classical and folk types of music. Film producers suggested that since money was the soul of the art of cinema and many of the ordinary people had only a limited

understanding of music, the first thing to do was to come to the aid of these, the real patrons of art. Then began the implementation of this suggestion. British rule had by this time introduced orchestras in hotels and other places. Our composers did not hesitate in adapting what was now new in them.

They blended the sweet and alluring notes of folk music, hitherto bound within the frames of melody, with the strains of orchestra. The best in folk poetry was utilised in creating the chariot of new verse and simple Talas of 4 and 6 Matras were harnessed to it. This wonderful creation delighted the dwellers of royal palaces and humble huts alike. The effect of this popularity on the Temple of Classical Music was, however, stunning in nature. A great commotion followed and slogans like 'Religion is in danger', 'Come to the rescue of Samaveda', 'Destroy the enemy' were raised. Requesting their chief patron, the government, to come to their aid, they suggested that the first onslaught against the popular music should be through the All India Radio. Thus popular music was branded as corruptor of the society and the doors of A.I.R. were closed to it. I was quite a little surprised to see that they were banning film music, while they should have really banned film poetry.

If we play the tune of a film song without the words, it will be seen that it contains the same notes as all Indian music does. *Swara* can be likened to water which takes the character of whatever it is mixed with. There are filthy songs like, '*Mori patli kamaria chhoro, Dekho choli ki dori na kholo*' and good

songs like, '*Mira ke prabhu girdhar nagar*' and '*Chalo man ganga jamuna teer*' and it depends on what you choose to sing. The same tune can be used for all of these. I hope this would illustrate the importance of poetry in music.

Now let us examine the question of using Western instruments. Who says such instruments were not there in ancient India? What we try to dub as a foreign instrument does not in any way distort Indian *Raga*; on the contrary it adds colour to popular light music. From the point of view of variety, we suffer from want of many kinds of instruments, the number of those left with us being insignificant.

Last, but not the least, is the important question as to what extent the mingling of Western and Indian music is justifiable. Quite often there are protests against this mingling and the reason why these protests are made perhaps is that our ears are not accustomed to the percussion instruments that are used. On account of this, even the Dadra and Kaharwa of our own country sounds like Ramba or Samba. A lot of Western music is set in these two time measures we should actually be proud of this fact since India was the first country to discover the art of music.

Another intriguing question is that of counterpoint or harmony. Music composers make frequent use of harmony to give colour to their tunes: some of us wrongly consider this as copying.

A third type of film music which is really a detestable type is where a music composer borrows pieces from a

Western composition and uses them in his own works to create noise, without understanding their meaning and use. This type of music is, in my opinion, the greatest danger to film music. Maybe that professionally it is paying and leading by many votes over other types, since there are many who will like anything new. But let us not forget that a polling is taking place all the time; the candidate leading now, may even forfeit his security deposit in the final verdict. Experts in the field of film music are of the view, that there is no harm in adapting something useful, no matter to what country or place it belongs. Writers have done the same thing in literature; men of fashion do so everyday. Why cannot the musician do the same? Apparently, there seems to be no reason why he cannot, but somehow or other one does not feel like agreeing to his doing so. Every country has its characteristics. India is proud of her music which gives her a place of distinction in the assembly of countries. To maintain the dignity of her music is the duty not only of classical musicians but of all concerned with the music. I am

sure that we would not be obliged to look to other countries for new forms of music at least for a number of years. Only if we ransack our own stores and discover some of the innumerable music varieties which lie hidden in it, we can always adapt them to suit our purpose. There should be absolutely no need to copy: if like something in the Western style, we should try to create along the same lines and achieve similar results. One has only to use brains - 'Yojakasya Tatra Durlabhah'.

Now that we are a free nation, artistes belonging to all branches of art owe a responsibility towards it. They have to maintain her dignity.

In the end, I would like to assert that the Samaveda is there even in the films. I am happy to note that this fact has been realised and efforts are being made towards its development. I am sure the future of film music is very bright.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Government which is shouldering great responsibility in this connection.

- Courtesy: "Music Mirror" - April 1958

OBITUARY

The strength of Upa Pakkavadyas was considerably weakened when two of the stalwarts of Kanjira, Shri V. Nagarajan and Shri Harisankar, died the news of which reached us at the time of going to the press.

The two were ever imaginative and innovative and even as they remained a 'sideman' to the main Mridangam they soulfully enhanced the rhythmic play with their deft strokes. The 'silenced strokes' is a loss irretrievable.

From The Archives

"MUSIC OF THE MOVIES"

By Naushad Ali

"It has taken me sixteen years to cross the road!" That was the emotion-soaked response of the debutante music director, Naushad Ali, way back in 1953, to the felicitation extended to him following the release at Broadway of "Baiju Bawra", his first film to which he composed music and which became a hit.

Yes, it was an uphill task, a struggle for survival, for young Naushad who left Lucknow, his hometown, in 1937 with all hopes to make a life in music! What a disillusionment, a shattered dream to begin with, when he had to trudge all the distance from eastern suburbs of Bombay to the southern tip to teach piano! More. Many a night he used to spend sleepless at the pavement opposite the Broadway Theatre, looking longingly at it for an opening! When it did happen, he could not overcome his emotions going down memory lane.

"From a city of trams, innocence, and nights so calm and silent that Hindi film songs could be recorded in public gardens", Bombay, today's Mumbai, has come a long way and film music too has undergone a sea-change.

What had the musician at heart and soul, Naushad, a Samrat in film music, to observe, hardly three years after his debut, in 1956 when the Silver Screen celebrated its Silver Jubilee?

We reproduce below the article of the Samrat Naushad Ali, "Music of the Movies", published in the "Indian Talkies (1931-56), the Silver Jubilee Souvenir", brought out by the Film Federation of India. --Ed.)

Film music has come into its own. It is growing in beauty day by day. It has won for itself a distinctly high place in modern film art and it is going to stay there. What it lacks in depth, is more than amply compensated by its warmth, spontaneity and sweetness. Being entirely free from the delicate complexities of classical art, film songs are surprisingly easy to appreciate and their charm lies mostly in their freshness, variety and fast tempo. Quickness of rhythm plays a great importance in the composition of film music and has gone a great way in making it so enchanting and refreshing as it is.

songs, and wonder why the new fangled, cheap and frivolous and at times vulgar songs have so successfully eclipsed our noble classical art.

But the reason is not far to seek. Classical Sangeet has never been the art of the masses. It was first born in the sacred temples, and later flourished in the glamorous courts of the Rajas, Maharajas and the Nawabs. These feudal chiefs were the greatest patrons of classical art and employed in their services, the best masters of the times as their court musicians. The common people who had no access to the great Durbars were never offered the opportunity of listening to classical music. They could not, therefore, acquire an appreciative ear for it. It is a pity that no sustained effort has been made to

Many highbrows frown at the present day film music. They bemoan that the popularity of Classical Sangeet is sadly suffering at the hands of film

bring about a systematic organisation of our classical music. This may have largely been due to the fact that classical music, by its very nature, is difficult and almost impossible to be preserved in writing.

SECRECY

Then again, our great masters guarded the secret of their music too jealously to be taught to outsiders. This tendency eventually resulted in the classical art becoming the monopoly of a few "gharanas" of musicians which strictly barred all access to any one outside the fold. Only one or two favourite pupils of the Ustad were initiated into the secret, and that too on their word of honour that they (pupils) would never betray this sacred trust by passing on the mysterious knowledge to any outsider. Consequently, it frequently happened that with the death of the last musician of a 'gharana' their music was completely wiped off from existence. Hundreds of unique Khayals and Dhurpads were thus eternally lost to the world. It is quite obvious from the above that Classical Sangeet in spite of its being purely Indian, could not be called the music of the Janata.

It is worthy to be mentioned here that since Independence, our government is making a continuous effort to popularise classical music and to produce a taste for classical music in the common man. The numerous Classical Sangeet programmes of the All India Radio and the countrywide Music conferences are helping and contributing to the goal of popularity of Bharatiya music and during these days

our film music has also changed its course and is running fastly towards Shastriya Sangeet. I had the privilege to introduce this type in my recent hit *Baiju Bawra*. In spite of all this and with due respect to classical Sangeet, I shall not hesitate to say that the film songs resemble the folk songs far more closely than classical music does, and has been popular among the Janata due to the following reasons:

- (a) Film music has nothing to do with the intricacies and complexities of the classical art and consists of folk songs and is enjoyed all over the country in almost every conceivable language.
- (b) Film songs due to their limited length of about 3 or 4 minutes can easily entertain the masses with their sweetness and shortness.
- (c) Film music accompanies the sweet and sentimental lyrics, and the combination of music and poetry closely draws the attention of the audience who pick them up with marvellous appreciation.
- (d) Film music, contrary to the classical music, is accompanied by the orchestra.

NEW THEATRE'S CONTRIBUTION

After the introduction of Talkie films in India, the songs were introduced but at the early stage film music could not be popular. But the credit for popularising film music must go to the New Theatres Ltd., of Calcutta that introduced orchestra in film songs, and since then orchestration of film songs has been sweepingly gaining ground. All film songs (with rare exceptions) are essentially Indian in their composition - only the accompanying musical instruments are mostly Western. And because orchestra music has come to play a tremendously important part in the composition of film songs, it sometimes creates the illusion,

specially to the uninitiated that film-music has become Western in its style.

Although there is no dearth of purely Oriental music instruments, Sitar, Veena, Flute, Sarangi, Rabab, Israj, Shahnai, etc., to name only a few of them, our old masters never thought of utilising them collectively. These instruments were employed exclusively for solo performances, and Tanpura was considered the most suitable for the purpose of accompaniment. It was only later almost quite recently, that some singers began to favour Sarangi in place of Tanpura.

ORCHESTRA

The conception of orchestra was quite alien to the Indian mind and the initial credit for popularising it in our country goes to All India Radio that began to broadcast occasional programmes of orchestral music. The listeners were not slow to appreciate this new style of music, which provided them a happy relief from the lengthy classical songs. Music lovers all over the country

acclaimed orchestra accompaniment as better suited to the film-songs than the usual original instruments hitherto employed. It goes without saying that orchestra lends to the film music a peculiar charm of its own. A film song, shorn of its orchestral music, will invariably lose half its beauty and effectiveness. Specially in the intervening gaps, where the singer's voice is silent, the orchestral pieces, judiciously composed to reflect the mood of the situation, impart to the song a sweetness most delightful to the ears.

Although background music has come to be considered an essential and indispensable part of the films, in India, it is still in its initial stages and is struggling for its proper place. The film people themselves treat it rather casually and are not quite clear in their own minds about its importance. Nevertheless, background music is to a film, what expression is to a human face. A film without background music will be as lifeless and flat as the face of a dead man.

Golden Saying

"To look is one thing. To see what you look is another. To understand what you see is a third. To learn from what you understand is still something else."

"But to act on what you learn is all that really matters."

- Author unknown

From the Archives

Soft Voice That Came of the Sore Throat

By R. C. Boral

When I joined the New Theatres as Music Director, the system of re-recording was still unknown. So what the musicians were called upon to do was to play during the actual shooting of a scene, the songs being taken directly along with the music. The dialogue portions did not generally have a musical background in those days.

Chandidas in Bengali, directed by Debaki Bose, for the first time proved the efficacy of background music in our films.

As the technical chief of the N. T. Studio, Nitin Bose, kept himself abreast of every technical development in the West. It was he, who first mooted to me the idea of playback song. Its rich possibilities at once attracted me. Sound engineer Mukul Bose agreed to make an experiment of it. We did the dance-cum-song number in the stage sequence of *Bhagyachakra* (*Dhoop Chhaon* in Hindi) in this new method. It proved tremendously successful. From then on the system of playback song and music came to be introduced in all pictures.

Charlie Chaplin's *City Lights* acted as a great inspiration to me, as it made me realise how drama could be explained through music. I practically learnt the distinction between general music and effect music from that picture. How many times I saw that picture I do not remember exactly. But it must have been dozens of times.

Another source of inspiration was

Walt Disney's cartoon films. From them I had early imbibed a desire to make a cartoon film myself and animate it with music.

When Prabhat Film Company announced its first cartoon production *Zambo Kaka*, I was spurred to take immediate action. I unfolded to Mr. B. N. Sircar my cherished desire. He agreed to finance me. With the help of a devoted group of artistes I went to work on what turned out to be India's first cartoon film *Pea Brothers*, in *On a Moonlight Night*. It was completed in less than a month's time, and was released in Bombay before Prabhat had even finished *Zambo Kaka*. I gained rich experience from this modest venture.

My reminiscence would be incomplete if I do not refer to the one and only Kundan Lal Saigal.

Harish Chandra Bali was at that time staying in my house. He told me of a boy from his native Jullundur who had a very melodious voice and wanted to work in films. I asked him to bring the boy for a test.

On my way to the studio, I stopped at a Chowringhee store to buy cigarettes. A lanky young fellow, presumably another customer, was also there humming softly. The sweetness of his voice impressed me.

Imagine my surprise when on the very next morning, Harish Chandra Bali presented to me this young man as his

friend from Jullundur. He was none other than Kundan Lal Saigal. I took him to Mr. B. N. Sircar and he at once gave him an appointment. Saigal was then working as a salesman of type-writing machines on Rs. 80 a month. His starting salary at N. T. was Rs. 200.

SOFT VOICE OF SAIGAL

The humming style of singing, popularised by Saigal on the screen, was the result of an accident. He was suffering from a sore throat, and as soon

as he started singing in full voice it cracked. As the film's date of release was imminent, we were in a sort of fix at the turn of events. Suddenly my attention was drawn to Saigal singing the song in soft voice. This time it showed no crack.

I asked the sound man to record the song in that style. The result was more than gratifying. From that time Saigal developed a penchant for singing in soft voice.

Courtesy : "Indian Talkie 1931-56"
Silver Jubilee Souvenir

A Good Composition

What is the criterion to classify a song as a good composition?

According to Mysore Vasudevacharya, "a monumental music personality", an illustrious Vaggeyakara of Saint Tyagaraja Sishya Parampara:

"An ideal composition a product of emotion and a picture of the visions arising out of rich and variegated musical experience It should blossom out of the depths of the heart spontaneously, filled with rich melody and decorative effects born out of judgement. Structurally it should adhere to *Prasa*, *Yati* and *Antya*, the libretto being simple and easy to render. Sangatis are to be within limits and the Ragas chosen, if rare, should be such as to appeal to popular minds".

* * * * *

What is Classicism?

"Classicism to art is what *Eka Patni Vrita* is to a married man [Grahasta], avoiding the usual reference to and comparison with *pativrata* (chaste lady) to stress the fact that there shall ever be a Sita positively wherever there is a Rama. Classicism that is *Sampradaya* - oriented, conforms to the accepted *Lakshanas* and accepted *Paataanthara*. Classicism keeps in view merit and image, perfection and time-honoured usage, tradition, legacy and grammar which are vital for the enduring life of the art or art piece. One sees light music changing faces from decade to decade. And such ephemeral styles do not lend sustenance, strength and solidity to the art. They are at best 'hot foods' at wayside shops. Classicism enlightens and elevates while non-classical is more for pleasure and entertainment.

- "The Melodic Garland"

From The Archives

CONSERVE INDIA'S MUSIC HERITAGE AN APPEAL TO MUSIC DIRECTORS

By S. Kanagasabhai

From the very beginning music has been a must in all Indian Films. In a land where music formed part and parcel of the lives of the people any film without songs and music would necessarily be an anachronism. Quite in keeping with the order of things, early Indian film music was essentially Indian. So were the stories, dances and instruments used. It was also the time when the heroes and heroines sang their own songs and talented musicians composed the lilting melodies of the early Indian films. These songs were based on Indian folk as well as classical music. The bhajans were popular and music directors often borrowed heavily from this source. Along with it came the folk tunes of Bengal. In between were produced films dealing with the life of Tansen and Classical music took the place of folk music in these films. Music Directors were careful not to use any Western instruments and used typical period instruments. Such adherence to minute details is nowadays lacking in all branches of the industry.

The period roughly ends with the death of the golden-voiced Saigal and from then on it has been a case of borrowing from other countries. It was also during this time, that the Western instruments that were hesitatingly introduced became more or less accepted. Quite in contrast with Bhajans and the folk tunes that were used came the Persian and Egyptian tunes that

highlighted *Dulari* and other hits. Of course nobody was able to discern the easy way in which these tunes were copied until very much later. It was so because, the average man was not interested in Persian or Egyptian music. Meanwhile the singing stars were slowly disappearing and the playback system was brought into being. The changes in the film industry have no doubt made necessary certain changes in the technique of composing for films. Glamour created the necessity for playback singing and the introduction of foreign themes necessitated the introduction of new patterns in film music. Westernised dances and backgrounds created the necessity for Westernised tunes and instruments. The Arabian fantasies and adaptation of Hollywood films meant the music director too had to find something to fit the theme. Thus came the copying of Western music and the use of Western instruments. Music directors no longer hesitate to admit that they have copied Western records. They are even proud of it.

The music directors cannot be blamed for this sorry state of affairs. They had to keep pace with the times. Many of them have no grounding in Indian classical music, whereas the earlier music directors were exponents or performers themselves. But they have all forgotten that Indian music has all the rhythms of Western systems. Endowed with such a great musical heritage it

seems ridiculous that we should borrow so freely from Western music. Attempts to introduce Classical music in Indian films have been well received but our music directors are not in the least interested in the continued use of Indian music. They are getting used to easier ways, just play a record and get the tune ready-made.

The argument is that present day film music is popular but can we call them Indian? When Indian films are trying to reach the International market we should have Indian music in our films. Once the rhythm has been decided upon it is easy to blend any *Raag* to fit into the rhythm. Classical music in its pure form cannot be appreciated by all. But it could always be made light and some of the popular

Raags form the basis of the Folk tunes as well. *Raags* like *Des*, *Pilu*, *Maand* and *Kafi*, to mention only a few, are prominent in all Indian folk music - the music of the people. These could be used with great advantage by Music directors instead of fitting a Hindi lyric to the "*Wedding Samba*" or "*Irene Goodnight*".

A foreign audience wants to see something that is typically Indian, and not a hybrid adaptation of their films and music. Production for the International market is not the problem of the producer, or the Director. It is a problem that affects all branches of film-making including music.

- Courtesy : "*Indian Talkie - 1931-56*"
Silver Jubilee Souvenir

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From the Archives

MEANT-TO-HIT SONGS TO BE MADE TO ORDER LIMITATIONS ON THE FILM LYRICIST

By Pradeep

The film song was born in India with "Alam Ara" and it is good to feel that it is now twentyfive years old. Thus along with India's first talkie, the institution of the film-song writer also celebrates Silver Jubilee this year(1956).

The evolution of the film lyric during the last twentyfive years has had its own history and today like any other feature of a motion picture, a song has become an inevitable part of a film. A film-song writer is often compared with a literary poet and rightly so because minus his celluloid trappings, a lyricist is essentially a poet. But it is seldom realised by lay-outsiders that there is a basic difference between the work of these two. A poet has no limitations imposed over his literary canvas. He can sing in the wilderness and can complete his creation for the time being, if it pleases himself. The same is not the case with a lyricist. He has to compose his literary work within the confines of the pre-set situations laid down for him by the story-writer, director and the producer. He has to show all his art within this limited orbit.

SONG-CARPENTER

Then there is the limitation of length also. The film-song writer has to finish the job within the 300 or odd feet allotted to him in the picture per song. The literary poet has no such length-limit.

While a literary poet mostly composes for himself, the film lyricist has to compose for the society at large.

By the very nature of his work, a film-song composer is often, with some justification, called a song-carpenter who, like the furniture-maker, has to chisel out made-to-order songs according to the size and shape suggested by his clients.

"Not song for song's sake, but song for hit's sake" seems to correctly sum up the role of the film-lyric writer as every song given by him is expected to be a potential hit. At least that is what the director and the producer expect him to give. And here lies a crucial test for the lyric writer. In spite of all those limitations and pre-set pattern of his songs, he has to strive for a literary attempt that would give under the circumstances. In the effort, he has to please not only his patrons - the producer and the public - but, as far as possible, his innerself as well. In every creative writer there is a listener also and to please this inner audience within oneself is no joke.

Notwithstanding such trying conditions, the film lyricist has to take up the challenge and prove his mettle by turning out his best from the blueprint already chalked out for him.

INFLUENCE OF THE STAGE

When the Talkies came to India, the attention of our producers and directors was focused on the "vocal" audience of the stage, and so what was considered popular and necessary for the theatre-dramas was also thought to be equally good for the screen. The

dramas of Agha Hashra Kashmiri, Narayan Prasad Betaab and other doyens of the stage provided models for screenplays. The same was also true of songs.

It was inevitable that film-songs in the early period sounded like stage-songs and the early films produced at Bombay often had classical music. The influence of the Marathi stage and the classical music of famous singers like Bal Gandharva was distinctly visible in the early Prabhat pictures which had Marathon song numbers, rendered by well-known exponents like Gobindrao Tembe and others. Thus, the film song of the early Talkie period inherited two short-comings of the theatre - unnaturalness and artificial stagy effect.

WHY SONGS IN FILMS?

The credit for starting natural nearer-to-life songs in films goes to the New Theatres of Calcutta and the Bombay Talkies. The songs of poet Arzoo in many a New Theatres' hit became very popular throughout India and the lyrics of progressive writers in Bombay Talkies pictures were very much appreciated. Their literary contents broke the stagnation in film songs, and a new wake of purposeful lyrics pervaded the screen. The stage in Bengal was very much advanced and moreover Bengal had a highly advanced level of lyric-writing with literary giants like Rabindranath Tagore serving as an ideal. In the same way, under the guiding spirit of Himansu Rai, the Bombay Talkies pictures created a new level in lyric-writing right from the beginning. Thus gradually, the film lyric has undergone revolutionary changes for the better.

During the last twentyfive years, a

film song has become such a powerful factor of popularity that it has been accepted as an inseparable limb of our motion pictures. Against this predominance of music the question is often asked: Why should there be any music at all in our pictures and why do we not make films without a song?

Here we have to bear in mind one important fact that India is the most music-minded country in the world. All our Puranas and Vedas are rendered in musical stanzas, and our ancient dramas are in music. Even our Gods and Goddesses have been picturised before us with musical accompaniments. Saraswati, the Goddess of learning, has Veena, Narad has a Tamboor, Krishna has a flute and Shankar, the Lord of Destruction, has a Damaru in his hand. Our best Sanskrit literary pieces in verse and "mantras" at ceremonies are chanted in musical notes. Our saints like Tulsidas, Tukaram, Narsinh, Kabir and even a devotee of the fair sex like Meerabai have all been singing their bhajans in songs.

Coming to nearer times, our greatest national leader Mahatma Gandhi had musical prayers and devotional hymns as part of his daily routine. In our social life also we are a music-minded people. We have songs when someone is born, songs for morning prayers, songs for festivals, songs for marriages, songs for lulling babies to sleep and even when a person is laid to eternal rest, he or she is accompanied by mournful music or bhajans.

Therefore, music and songs have become the woof and warp of our daily existence and cannot be easily divorced from it. Singing has become a national

habit with us, and few people sing as often and as ceremoniously as the people of India. It is a hereditary gift handed down to us from generation to generation. Hence a picture without any song could be just an exception and not the rule. After all, our films have to serve as the mirror of our contemporary social life. Of course, there can be a difference of opinion about the number of songs in our pictures and instead of 10 to 12 songs, people could legitimately plead for 6 to 8 songs in one picture.

AN ECHO FROM ETHIOPIA

The motion picture is a most powerful medium of mass-contact and, therefore, the screen-song has a ready and most accessible market all over India stretching to the farthest corners. The vast literary sweep of a screen-song is brought home to us when we find our film songs being sung in other countries as well. We all remember how the song "Main Awara Hoom" proved popular in Russia. Recently I was told by a religious dignitary who went to Ethiopia that during an audience with the Emperor Haile Selassie, he was asked for the meaning of an Indian film song which had become very popular in Abyssinia. To my pleasant surprise, I was told that it was my song "Kithna Badal Gaya Insaan" from "Nastik". When the missionary explained the universal significance of that song to the Ethiopian Emperor, he was delighted with its everlasting appeal for the whole humanity. I recall all this to emphasise the mighty power of a film lyric.

This tremendous potentiality of the film-song invests the job of a lyric writer with a great social and national

responsibility. It is true, like all professional men, he has to give what the clients demand but even then he should use this medium with due care.

A motion picture has undreamt of possibilities to carry the message to the masses and I feel, as lyric writers whose words go straight to the hearts of millions, our responsibility increases a hundred times more than other writers.

It is not necessary for us to become cheap or to play to the gallery to earn money and popularity, and if we have to portray life in all its healthier aspects, we have to create songs which could be sung in every household without the slightest hesitation. Here we are dealing with emotions of the people and playing with them amounts to playing with fire itself. A clean, idealistic song may appear to fail in the beginning, but all good things triumph in the end.

TOWARDS LIGHT

I am sure as we sit looking back at the twenty five eventful years that have passed, we shall be more and more conscious of our duty and responsibility towards our nation and our people, and in our own humble way contribute our mite towards the great task of nation-building embarked upon by our beloved leaders. Let our film songs lead us towards light and not darkness, towards nobler sentiments of human values and not social degradation. Let us, then, sing our way to national emancipation..... towards a new era of peace, progress and equality.

What an optimism! - (Ed)

- Courtesy : "Indian Talkie 1931-56"
Silver Jubilee Souvenir

A Review

A UNIQUE JUBILEE FETE

By N. Harharan

Dance and music lovers in Mumbai witnessed a unique Silver Jubilee Festival last November end at the three-day "Rajata Mahotsav" presented by Mumbai's noted dance institution, "Nriyodaya". It is not often one guru honours other senior gurus of styles other than her own. That was the speciality of the director of this institution, Jayashree Rajagopalan, a disciple of Dr. Padma Subramaniam.

At the first day programme, eight senior gurus of Mumbai, some septuagenarians and octogenarians, Kathak queen Sitara Devi, Guru T. K. Mahalingam Pillai, and Kalyanasundaram of Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, Guru Mani of Kalasadan, Acharya Parvathi Kumar, Guru Rajee Narayan, Manipuri exponents Darshana and Ranjana Jhaveri were honoured along with one of the founders of the Shanmukhananda Sabha, S. Seshadri by the chief guests, actress Hema Malini and Dr. Padma Subramaniam. They were conferred the title "San-Margadarsi".

The highlight of the programme at the massive Shanmukhananda auditorium that preceded the felicitation was an excerpt from Kalidasa's *Abhignana Sakuntalam*, featuring Jayashree's portrayal of Shakuntala's falling in love with King Dushyant and her later travails, and a short episode from Tagore's *Chandalika*. Several students of "Nriyodaya", senior and junior, presented dance sequences;

Jayashree's daughter Aishwarya stood prominent. The music composed by the other daughter Vaishnavi and Ramya Sundaresan was lustrous.

Two interesting lecture-demonstrations by Dr. Padma Subramaniam (on "Music for Dance") and Allepey P. Venkatesan (on "Laya, the Bedrock of Music") at the Mysore Association Hall marked the second day of the fete. After tracing the origin of music from the Vedas through the medieval times of "Tevaram", "Prabhandam" and later Thanjavur quartet period, Padma stressed that music for dance was different from a concert. The singer must understand the mood of the dancer and be able to anticipate the dancer's mime and movements.

Allepey Venkatesan stressed how "laya" was all encompassing, the cosmos and the atom with its nucleus of electrons and neutrons moving around it had their precise "laya". In Karnatic music even though raga *alapana*s were done without tala still they had their own laya, without which the correct bhava of the particular raga could not be portrayed. Dr. Padma's dance of "Sukha Lasya" co-ordinated to the Todi raga *alapana* of Venkatesan was an unexpected treat enjoyed by connoisseurs, especially the musical Sancharas and dance nuances in rapport. In the evening at the same venue Venkatesan gave an enjoyable concert accompanied by Anand Viswanathan (Violin) and S.

Sankaranarayanan (Mridangam).

The third day's programme in the morning was at the Shanmukhananda auditorium which drew a large audience to witness the solo performance of "Bhagavad Gita" (four scenes) by Dr. Padma Subramaniam preceded by a short discourse on the subject by the chief guest Pujyashri Rameshbhai Oza. Padma's capacity to switch moods made her portrayal impactful and the message of the immortal Guru Krishna went home to the responsive viewers.

The concluding programme of the

festival was a veena recital by B. Kannan, nephew of Padma Subramaniam, at the Mysore Association Hall. The talented young vainika played with gusto, and despite the disturbance caused by mike malfunctioning more than once, he kept his cool and nonchalantly maintained rapport with the appreciative audience.

Jayant Kastuar, Secretary of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi, too graced the fete as a chief guest. On the cultural map of India Mumbai has now become a prominent spot.

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"KING OF PERCUSSION, QUEEN OF MELODY"

by Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman

சென்னை ஸங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் 75-வது ஆண்டு மஹாநாட்டின் தலைவர் உமையாள்புரம் கே. சிவராமனின் தலைமையுரையிலிருந்து...

1952 ஆம் ஆண்டு சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் வெள்ளி விழாவில் கலந்துகொண்ட நான். இவ்வருடம் சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் பவழ விழாவில் தலைமைப் பொறுப்பை ஏற்பதில் மகிழ்ச்சி அடைகிறேன்.

எனக்கு, சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையினர் அளித்த இந்தப் பெரிய கௌரவம், இசை உலகில் மிக்க புகழ்வாய்ந்த எனது கிராமத்திற்கும், இக்கிராமத்தில் தோன்றி இசை உலகில் அழியாப் புகழை நிலைநாட்டிய மகான்களுக்கும், லய வாத்தியங்களில் முடிசூடா மன்னராக விளங்கும் இந்த தெய்வீக வாத்தியத்திற்கும், என் கண்கண்ட தெய்வமான எனது பெற்றோர்கள், எனது தந்தை வழி பாட்டி அவர்களுக்கும், மிருதங்க கலை உலகிற்கு ஒப்பற்ற மார்க்கதரிசிகளான எனது குருநாதர்கள் பூஜ்யஸ்ரீ ஆறுபாதி ஸ்ரீ நடேச அய்யர், தஞ்சாவூர் ஸ்ரீ வைத்தியநாத அய்யர், பாலக்காடு ஸ்ரீ மணி அய்யர், சாக்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீ ரங்கு அய்யங்கார் அவர்களுக்கும், எனக்கு இக்கலை உலகில் உன்னத ஸ்தானத்தை அன்புடன், பரிவுடன் அள்ளி வாரி வழங்கிய மகாவித்வான்கள் அனைவருக்கும், இந்த தெய்வீக வாத்தியத்தை அன்றும் இன்றும் மிக்க உயரிய முறையில் கையாண்டு வரும் வித்வான்கள் அனைவருக்கும் அளிக்கப்பட்ட மிகச்சிறந்த கௌரவமாக இதனை நான் கருதுகிறேன்.

வேதகாலம் முதல், இன்றைய விஞ்ஞானயுகம் வரை, இவ்வாத்தியத்தின் அருமை பெருமைகளை மகான்களும், அறிஞர்களும் வெகுவாகப் போற்றியிருக்கிறார்கள். கடந்த 30 ஆண்டுகளாக இந்த அரிய தத்துவங்களில் என்னை ஈடுபடுத்திக்கொண்டும், ஆராய்ச்சி செய்து கொண்டும், இந்தியாவிலும், மேலைநாடுகளிலும், இந்த வாத்தியத்தின் சிறப்பையும், பெருமைகளையும், நமது கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தின் மேன்மையையும், அதன் ஈடில்லா ஒப்பற்ற ஸ்தானத்தையும், கச்சேரிகள், சொற்பொழிவுகள், கட்டுரைகள் மூலமாகவும் இச்சேவையை செய்து வருகிறேன். நான் தற்சமயம் இக்கலையில் ஆராய்ச்சி செய்து கொண்டிருக்கும் ஒரு சில கருத்துக்களையும், இனிவரும் காலத்தில் செய்ய வேண்டிய ஆக்க முறைகளையும், திறம்பட அவைகளை உருவாக்குவதற்கு என்னென்ன தேவை என்பதைப் பற்றிக் கூற விரும்புகிறேன்.

உலகம் போற்றும், அறிவிற்கிறந்த விஞ்ஞானி திரு ஆல்பர்ட் ஐன்ஸ்டீன் ஒரு அரிய தத்துவத்தைக் கூறினார்.

"நான் இவ்வுலகில் உள்ள மிகவும் ஆச்சரியப்படக்கூடிய அற்புத படைப்புகளைக் கண்டு வியக்கவில்லை. ஆனால், கடவுள் எந்த அபிப்பிராயத்தின் அடிப்படையில் இவைகளை நிர்மாணம் செய்தார் என்பதில் நான் ஆச்சரியம் அடைகிறேன்".

அதுபோல, மிருதங்கத்தைப் படைத்து, நாதரூபமாக அதனை சிருஷ்டித்து, பற்பல நாக ஜாலங்களின் பரிமாணத்தை விரிவுபடுத்தி, இந்த வாத்தியத்தை முழுமையாக்கி நமக்கு அளித்த அந்த பரம்பொருள் ஏன், எப்படி, எதற்காக இப்படிப்பட்ட வாத்தியத்தை நமக்கு அளித்தார் என வினவினால், அவரால் நமக்கு கொடுக்கப்பட்ட இந்த ஜன்மம் போதாது. ஆயினும், கிடைத்த

ஜன்மத்தின் மூலம் இந்த வாத்தியத்தின் பெருமைக்கு மெருகூட்டுவன யாவை என்று, யோசித்துப் பார்த்தால், எனக்குப் புலப்பட்டுள்ள சில விஷயங்களின் ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு, விஞ்ஞானிகளும், மாநில, மத்திய அரசாங்கங்களின் உதவிகளும், கலை ஆர்வம் கொண்ட தனவந்தர்களும், தொழில் அதிபர்களும், C.L.R.I., I.I.T., பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள், சங்கீத வித்வத் சபை போன்ற பெரிய நிறுவனங்களின் உதவிகளும் கிடைக்குமானால், எனக்கு மிக்க உறுதுணையாக இருக்கும் என நம்புகிறேன்.

மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்திற்கு இருபக்கமும் உள்ளவை வலந்தலை, இடந்தலை மூட்டுகள் எனப் பெயர். இவைகளை நிர்மாணம் செய்யும் போது, சிற்சில சமயங்களில் வலந்தலை மூட்டில் எச்சு, தக்கு என்று சொல்லக்கூடிய ஸ்ருதி சம்பந்தப்பட்ட பிழைகள் ஏற்படக்காரணங்கள் இருக்கின்றன. இந்த பிழைகளை அகற்ற, ஓரளவிற்கு மேல் Factory Precision ல் இந்த வலந்தலை, இடந்தலை மூட்டுகளை உண்டாக்கலாம் எனக் கருதி, நான் ஒரு Mechanical Jig ஐ (இயந்திரக்கருவி) உருவாக்கி, அதில் குறிப்பிடத்தக்க வெற்றியும் கண்டேன். இத்துறையில் இனைய தலைமுறையினர் மேலும் ஆராய்ச்சி செய்தால் வருங்காலத்தில் மிக்க பலன் கிடைக்கும் என நம்புகிறேன்.

வைரம் பாய்ந்த பலா போன்ற மரங்கள் தற்காலத்தில் கிடைப்பதற்கு அரிதாக இருப்பதாலும், இதனை உருவாக்கும் கலைஞர்களின் எண்ணிக்கையும் நாளுக்கு நாள் குறைந்து கொண்டு வருவதாலும், மிருதங்கத்தின் பளுவைக்குறைத்து, உள் அளவை அதிகரித்து, அதன் மூலம் நாதத்தை அதிகரிக்கவும், வாத்தியத்தின் அளவுகளை கனகச்சிதமாகச் செய்யவும், பிரயாணத்தின் போது வாத்தியங்களுக்கு அதிக சேதம் வராமல் தடுக்கவும், Fibre glass ல் உண்டாக்கப்பட்ட மிருதங்கத்தை சில வருடங்களுக்கு முன் இசை உலகிற்குக் கொண்டு வந்தேன். இந்த Fibre glass வாத்தியதிலிருந்து வரும் நாதங்கள், மரத்தினால் செய்யப்பட்ட மிருதங்கத்தின் நாதங்களுக்கு இனையாக இருந்தது. வித்வான்களும், ரஸிகப்பெருமக்களும் இந்த நன்முயற்சியை வரவேற்றனர். நம்மிடையே புழக்கத்தில் உள்ள சில தாள வாத்தியங்களை இந்த Fibre glass னால் அவசியம் செய்ய வேண்டும் என நான் கருதுகிறேன். இந்த Fibre glass மிருதங்கத்தை நான் கர்நாடக இசை உலகிற்கு அறிமுகப்படுத்தியது ஒரு புதிய திருப்பம் எனக் கருதுகிறேன். இந்தப் புதிய திருப்பம் இனி வரும் கலைஞர்களுக்குப் பெருமளவில் உதவியாக இருக்குமென நம்புகிறேன்.

தற்காலத்தில் மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தின் கனம் அதிகமாக இருக்கிறது. முன்னாளில் இத்தகைய கனம் இல்லை. கனம் அதிகமாக இருந்தால், வாத்தியத்தின் நாதமும் கனமாக (நல்ல Weight ஆக) இருக்குமென்ற நம்பிக்கை பொதுவாக உள்ளது. இது சரியல்ல. மனிதர்களுக்கு எப்படி உயரம், எடை, விகிதம் இருக்கிறதோ, அதேபோலத்தான் வாத்தியங்களுக்கும் இந்த விகிதம் இருக்க வேண்டும். மிருதங்க வாசிப்பில்தான் கனநயம் இருக்க வேண்டுமே தவிர, வாத்தியத்தில் அதிக கனம் இருப்பதால் யாதொரு பிரயோஜனமில்லை.

மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்திற்கு நாதத்தை அள்ளி வழங்கும், கறுப்பு நிறத்தில் அதன் வலது பாகத்தில் காணப்படுவது, தற்சமயம் கரணை, மருந்து, சாதம், சோறு என்று பல பெயர்களால் அழைக்கப்படுகிறது. இந்த Black patchஐ ஆராய்ந்து பார்த்ததில், இயற்கை நமக்கு அளித்த Iron and Manganese என்ற இரு தாதுப்பொருள்களின் சேர்க்கையினால், இந்த அபாரமான நாதம் கிடைக்கிறது. ஆனால் வாசிப்பதனாலும், வேறு சில காரணங்களினாலும் இந்த Black patch அடிக்கடி உதிர்ந்து விடுகிறது. நாதம் கெடாமலும், உதிராமலும் சில மாதங்களுக்காவது இந்த

Black patch இருந்தால், மிருதங்க வித்வான்களுக்கு நிறைய கச்சேரிகளுக்கு வாசிக்க மிகவும் சௌகரியமாக இருக்கும். இது விஷயமாக மேலும், பரிசோதனைகளும், ஆராய்ச்சிகளும் செய்ய வாய்ப்புகள் உள்ளன.

மேலை நாடுகளில் தற்சமயம் செயற்கைத் தோல் போன்ற வகைகளை Synthetic material அங்குள்ள தோற்கருவி வாத்தியங்களுக்கு உபயோகித்து, வெற்றியும் அடைந்துள்ளனர். Remo, Zildjian, Latin percussion, Pearl, Evans போன்ற பல பிரபல இசைக்கருவிகளை உண்டாக்கும் தொழிலதிபர்கள் இத்துறையில் பல ரக மாறுதல்களை செய்து சிறந்த வெற்றியையும் பெற்றுள்ளனர். மிருதங்கத்திற்கும் மற்றுமுள்ள பல தோல் வாத்தியங்களுக்கும் இந்த மேற்கூறிய முறையை ஆராய்ச்சி செய்து உபயோகத்திற்கு கொண்டு வந்தால் மிக்க சௌகரியமாக இருக்கும் ஆனால் செயற்கை தோல் வகைகள் எந்த அளவிற்கு நல்ல நாதத்தை அளிக்கும் என்பதை ஆராய்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறேன்.

டாக்டர் ஸி. வி. ராமன் அவர்கள் மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தில் உள்ள Harmonics ஐப் பற்றி விளக்கமாக ஒரு கட்டுரையில் தெரிவித்துள்ளார். மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தில் உள்ள குறிப்பிடத்தக்க சில சொற்களுக்கும், இந்த Harmonics க்கும் உண்டான சம்பந்தத்தையும், இவ்வாத்தியத்தில் உள்ள ரம்மியமான Overtones மற்றுமுள்ள நாதங்களின் சிறப்பு அம்சத்தையும் பல ஆண்டுகளாக ஆராய்ந்து, என்னுடைய சொற்பொழிவு நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் கூறி வருகிறேன். லயத்தையும், மின்னலை ஒத்த அதன் பிரகாசத்தையும், ரசிகர்களுக்கு நன்றாகப் புரியும்படி விளக்கிக் கூற வேண்டும் என்பதே என் கருத்து. இதுபோன்ற விஷயங்கள் எனக்கு புலப்பட்டதற்கு மகாகவி காளிதாஸனின் ஸ்லோகமே காரணம்.

पुराणमित्तयेव न साधु सर्वं न चापि काव्यं नवमित्यवद्यम् ।

सन्तः परीक्ष्य अन्यतरद्भजन्ते मूढः परप्रत्ययनेय बुद्धिः ॥

இதன் சாராம்சம்: “தொன்மையில் உள்ள எல்லாமே மிகச் சிறந்தது என எண்ணவேண்டாம். புதியதில் உள்ளவை அனைத்தும் பிரயோஜனமற்றது எனவும் நினைக்க வேண்டாம். தொன்மையின் சிறப்புகளையும், புதியவற்றின் நல்ல அம்சங்களையும் எவன் ஒருவன் எடுத்துக் கொண்டு அவைகளை உபயோகப்படுத்துகிறானோ, அவனே உலகில் சிறந்த புத்திமான்” என்று பரதேவதை சரஸ்வதியின் அவதாரமாகிய காளிதாஸன் கூறுகிறார்.

நமது நாட்டின் ஸநாதந தர்மத்தின் கருத்துக்கள் யாவும், உலகிலுள்ள எந்த நாட்டவர்க்கும் சிறந்த போதனையாகவும், அறிவுரையாகவும் அமைந்துள்ளது போல, நம் கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தில் உள்ள நூற்றுக்கணக்கான ராகங்களும், தாளங்களும், அவைகளுக்கு உண்டான ரஸானுபாவங்களும், உலகிலுள்ள அனைத்து இசைப்பிரிவுகளுக்கும் ஆணி வேராக இருக்கிறது. அண்மைக்காலத்தில் நம் கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தின் ஒப்பற்ற பெருமையை மேலை நாட்டிலுள்ள இசை விற்பன்னர்களும், சாகித்திய கர்த்தாக்களும் உணர்ந்து, தங்களுடைய இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் நம் ராகங்களையும், தாளங்களையும் உபயோகிப்பதுடன், தென்னிந்தியாவிற்கு விஜயம் செய்து நமது இசையின் நுணுக்கங்களை ஆர்வத்துடன் கற்றுக் கொள்கிறார்கள்.

ஆயினும், நமது நாட்டிலிருக்கும் சிற்சில விஷயங்கள் நமக்கு வேதனை தருவதாக அமைந்துள்ளன. ஹிந்துஸ்தானி சங்கீதத்தில் தபலாவிற்கு உண்டான ஸ்தானத்தை விட, கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தில் மிருதங்கத்திற்கு உண்டான ஸ்தானமும், பொறுப்பும், கடமைகளும்,

உரிமைகளும், மிக அதிகம். இந்த விபரங்களை ரஸிகர்களும், வித்வான்களும், இந்த இசையை ஆதரிக்கும் ஸ்தாபனங்களும் நன்கு அறிவர். தனியார் நிறுவனங்களிலோ, கலாசாலைகளிலோ, பல்கலைக்கழகங்களிலோ தபலாவிற்கு தனி Department, Head of Department, Professor இதுபோன்ற வசதிகள் உள்ளன. இதற்காக அங்குள்ள கலைஞர்களும், கலை அன்பர்களும் மிக்க சிரத்தை எடுத்துக்கொள்கின்றனர். அதே முறையில் தென்னாட்டில் இசைக் கல்லூரிகளிலும், கலாசாலைகளிலும், தனியார் நிறுவனங்களிலும், பல்கலைக்கழகங்களிலும் மிருதங்கத்திற்கு தனி Department, Head of Department, Professors, research and development மற்றும் இத்துறையில் ஆராய்ச்சி செய்து Doctorate வாங்குவதற்கு வசதிகள் ஏற்பட அரசாங்கமும், கலை அன்பர்களும் வழி செய்ய வேண்டுமெனக் கேட்டுக்கொள்கிறேன். இந்த முறையில் ஆரம்பித்தால், பின்னர் பற்பல வய வாத்தியங்களை இத்துறையின் கீழ் சேர்த்துக் கொள்வதோடு, இவைகளைப் பயிலும் வித்யார்த்திகளும் பயனடைவர்.

இத்துடன் இணைந்த மற்றொரு விபரத்தை பற்றியும் இங்கு குறிப்பிடுகிறேன். பல ஆண்டுகளாக தென்னாட்டில் உள்ள பல்கலைக்கழகங்களில் உள்ள முக்கிய நபர்களிடம், நான் கூறிக்கொண்டிருக்கும் விபரங்களின் சாராம்சத்தைத் தெரிவிக்கிறேன். கர்நாடக இசைத்துறையில் பல ஆண்டுகளாக இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகள் மூலமாக, பேரும் புகழும் அடைந்த கலைஞர்களில் பலர் கல்லூரிகளிலோ அல்லது பல்கலைக்கழகங்களிலோ இசைப் பிரிவில் பட்டதாரிகளாக இல்லை. இந்த இசைக்கலைஞர்களில் பலர் இசைப்பிரிவில் Doctorate வாங்க வேண்டும் என்ற எண்ணம் இருந்தபோதிலும், இசைப்பிரிவில் பட்டதாரிகளாக இல்லாத காரணத்தினால், Doctorate பண்ண முடியாமல் இருக்கிறது. இத்துணை ஒப்பற்ற கலைஞர்களுக்கு இந்த நிறுவனங்கள் Exemption கொடுத்து Doctorate செய்வதற்கு ஆவன செய்ய வேண்டும்.

தற்காலத்தில் இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்காக மிருதங்கக் கலைஞர்கள் இந்தியாவிலும் மேலை நாடுகளிலும் உள்ள எல்லா முக்கியமான இடங்களுக்கும் செல்கிறார்கள். பிரயாணங்களில் ஏற்படும் சேதங்களைத் தவிர்க்க, மிருதங்கத்திற்காக சுமார் 29 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன், அதாவது 1972-ம் ஆண்டில், Rexin மற்றும் water proof னால் ஆன உறையை (Carry bag) என்னுடைய மலேசியா, சிங்கப்பூர் பிரயாணத்தின் போது மிருதங்க உலகிற்கு வழங்கினேன். இப்போது இந்த உறை மிகவும் பிராபல்யமாக இருக்கிறது. பின்னர் Fibre glassல் உண்டாக்கப்பட்ட பெட்டிகளிலும் Container மூலமாகவும் இவ்வாத்தியத்தை எடுத்துக் கொண்டு போக ஆரம்பித்தேன். இதன் மூலமாக இவ்வாத்தியத்திற்கு ஏற்படும் சேதம் நன்றாக குறைக்கப்பட்டது. இதையும் கூட இன்னும் நவீனப்படுத்த நாம் முயல வேண்டும்.

"Thanjavoor Vaidyanatha Iyer School for Percussion" என என்குருநாதர் பெயரில் 6 வருடங்களுக்கு முன்பு சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையினர் ஒரு தனி பள்ளியை ஆரம்பித்துள்ளனர். இதற்கு நான் டைரக்டராக இருக்கிறேன். மிக நன்றாக நடக்கும் இப்பள்ளியில் பல மாணாக்கர்கள் மிருதங்கம் கற்றுக்கொண்டு வருகிறார்கள். இந்த School ஐ ஆரம்பித்த சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையினரை நான் மனதாரப் பாராட்டுகிறேன்.

எப்படி Tennis, Soccer, Badminton, Cricket, Swimming போன்ற பற்பல விளையாட்டுகளுக்கு நிறுவனங்கள் அமைத்து, Workshops, Camps போன்ற சிறப்பு நிகழ்ச்சிகளை நடத்தி, அந்தந்தப் பிரிவில் உள்ள சிறந்த விளையாட்டு வீரர்களைக் கொண்டு மாணாக்கர்களுக்கு போதிக்கிறார்களோ, அவ்வகையில், நம் கர்நாடக இசையில் உள்ள பல பிரிவுகளுக்கு இவைகளில் மிகத் தேர்ச்சியும், ஞானமும், அனுபவமும் உள்ள கலைஞர்களைக் கொண்டு Voice culture, Tonal modulation, fingering techniques, stance, sitting postures, sound

production, memorising methods, handling of instruments, History and science of the relevant instruments இது போன்ற பற்பல நுணுக்கங்களைக் கற்பித்தால், மிக்க நன்மை ஏற்படுவதுடன், இந்த வித்தை வாழையடி வாழையாக வளரும் என்பது திண்ணம்.

வாத்தியங்களை வாசிக்கும் போது இருவிதமாக அவைகளின் வாசிப்பு முறைகளின் வழிகளைக் கூறுவது வழக்கம். ஒன்று, பாட்டை ஒட்டிய அபாரமான வழி Gayaki Style. மற்றொன்று வாத்தியங்களை வாசிப்பதில் மிக விசேஷமான தேர்ச்சி Instrumental Virtuosity. வாத்தியங்களைக் கேட்கும் போது பாட்டின் மரபாக இருந்து, அத்துடன் வாத்தியங்களை வாசிக்கும் மிக உயரிய தேர்ச்சியும் இருந்தால், அந்தக் கலைஞனை கலை உலகும், ரஸிக மக்களும் போற்றுவர். A happy wedlock of Gayaki style and instrumental virtuosity. அம்முறையில் மிருதங்க வாசிப்பும் அமைவதுதான் மிகவும் உன்னதமானது என்ற கருத்தை உணர்த்திய பெரியோர்களின் வழியை நாம் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும் எனக் கருதுகிறேன். இவ்வழியில் தான் என் மிருதங்க வாசிப்பினை அமைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறேன்.

இவ்விதத்தைக் கற்பித்தலும் மாணாக்கர்களுக்கு இதன் நுணுக்கங்களைப் புரிய வைப்பதும், ஒரு தனிக் கலை ஆகும். என் சீடர்களுக்கு நான் இவ்வாத்தியத்தை போதிக்கும் போது, ஆரம்பத்தில் தாளங்களுக்கு நன்றாக வாசிக்கவும், பின்னர் இந்த இசையின் முக்கிய அம்சங்களான வர்ணம், கீர்த்தனை, நிரவல், ஸ்வரப்ரஸ்தாரம் முதலானவற்றிற்கு சீரிய முறையில் வாசிக்கவும், அதற்குப் பின்னர் பாடகர்களுக்கு உயரிய முறையில் வாசிக்கவும் தயார் செய்கிறேன்.

பாடகர்களுக்கு தன் முழு ஒத்துழைப்பையும், அவர்களுடைய அன்றைய சாரீர, இதர வசதிகளை அனுசரித்து வாசித்து, பாடகர்களுக்கும், தங்களுக்கும், ரஸிகர்களாலும் ஏனைய வித்வான்களாலும், வெகுவாகக் கொண்டாடப்படும் சூழ்நிலையை உருவாக்குவதே மிருதங்க வித்வானின் தலையாய கடமையாகும். பாடகருக்கு மிக நன்றாக ஒரு மிருதங்கக் கலைஞர் வாசித்து விட்டால் முழுமையை அடையும் பாதையில் அவர் முன்னேறிக் கொண்டிருக்கிறார் எனக் கொள்ளலாம்.

கச்சேரியில் தனி ஆவர்த்தனம் என்பது கிருதியின் தொடர்ச்சியேதான். கிருதியின் காலப்பிரமாணம், அதன் அமைப்பு அவ்வப்போது இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் உள்ள கால அளவு, தான் வாசிக்கும் பாடகரின் அன்றைய சூழ்நிலை, தன் கற்பனைவளம், பாடகர் அல்லது வாத்தியத்தின் ஒலியின் பரிமாணம் இவைகளை கண் இமைக்கும் பொழுதிற்குள் தன் வயப்படுத்திக் கொண்டு, மிருதங்க வித்வான் தனி ஆவர்த்தன நிகழ்ச்சியை மிகமிகச் சிறப்பாக வழங்கி, அறிஞர்களையும், ரஸிகமக்களையும் தன்பால் ஈர்க்கவேண்டும். அப்போதுதான் ரஸிகர்களும், வித்வான்களும், "இன்று கச்சேரியில் மிருதங்கம் பாடியது, மிருதங்க வித்வானின் வாசிப்பு அபாரம் அற்புதம்", என போற்றுவார்கள்.

இந்த மேலான அனுபவத்தை மிருதங்க வித்வான் தானும் அடைந்து, அதை பிறருக்கும் வழங்க வேணுமாயின், தான் வாசிக்கும் வித்வானின் முதல் ரஸிகராக அவர் இருக்க வேண்டும். Charity begins at home. பாடகரின் அல்லது வாத்தியக் கலைஞரின் சாரீர, வாத்திய நாத கன பரிமாணத்தை உணர்ந்துவிட்டால், அதே நாதத்தின் அடிப்படையில்தான், மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தில் விரல்களும் ஒலியை எழுப்பும் என்ற உண்மையை நான் அனுபவபூர்வமாகத் தெரிந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறேன்.

Silence is also music என்ற கொள்கையின் அடிப்படையில் தான் ரஸிகத்வம் மேலான பதவியை அடைகிறது. விஸ்ராந்தி அல்லது இடைவெளி கொடுப்பது இசையின் தரத்தை மிக

உயர்வாக எடுத்துக்காட்டுகிறது. மிருதங்க வாசிப்பிலும் அவ்வப்போது இந்த விஸ்ராந்தி மிகத் தேவை. இதை எங்கு, எவ்வளவு, எப்போது கொடுக்க வேண்டும் என்பது ஞானத்தின் அஸ்திவாரத்திலும் அனுபவ முதிர்ச்சியாலும் வரவேண்டும். சர்வணம் அல்லது கேள்வி ஞானம் இந்த வித்தைக்கு மிக முக்கியமானது.

மிருதங்க வித்வானுடைய மற்றொரு கடமை என்னவெனில், தன்னுடன் வாசிக்கும் சகலய வித்வான்களுடைய திறமையை வெளிக்கொணர உண்டான சந்தர்ப்பங்களை அவர்களுக்கு இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் அளிக்க வேண்டும். இதன் மூலம் இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் ரசிகர்களுடைய ரசிக்கும் தன்மையின் சதவிகிதம் அதிகமாகும். அனைத்துக் கலைஞர்களும் ஒற்றுமையாகவும், மற்றவருடைய கலையை மனமாரவும் ரசித்தால், இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் தரம் கூடுவதோடு, ரசிகர்களின் ஆதரவும் பரிபூரண அளவில் கிடைக்கும்.

உலகிலுள்ள அனைத்து தோல் வாத்திய வகைகளிலும் மிருதங்கத்திற்கு ஈடான வாத்தியமில்லை என்பது உண்மை. இந்த சிகரமான ஸ்தானத்தை இவ்வாத்தியம் அடைந்ததற்குக் காரணம் இதன் முழுமை தான் - its adaptability, range, nada and versatility etc. லய வாத்தியங்களிலும், நாதத்தை வழங்குவதிலும் "Mridangam is the King of Percussion and Queen of Melody" என்று நான் எப்பொழுதும் கூறிக் கொண்டு வருகிறேன்.

உலக இசை அரங்குகளில், குறிப்பாக ஜாக்ஸ்பந்தி, Jazz, Fusion போன்ற பல இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் தற்போது மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தின் பங்கு கூடிக்கொண்டே வருகிறது. இது நம் எல்லோருக்கும் மிக்க மகிழ்ச்சியை அளிக்கிறது. இந்நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் மூலமாக மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தின் பெருமையை உலக மக்கள் அறிய வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படுகிறது. Kosa camp, Percussive Arts Society போன்ற உலகப் பிரசித்தி பெற்ற ஸ்தாபனங்களில் நான் கலந்து கொண்டு வாசித்ததின் மூலம், அங்கு எனக்குக் கிடைத்த அமோகமான வரவேற்பும், மேலை நாட்டு ஒப்பற்ற தாள வாத்திய கலைஞர்கள் மிருதங்க வாத்தியத்தின் நுணுக்கங்களை அறிய விருப்பம் தெரிவித்ததும், இதற்குச் சான்றாகும். இதுபோன்ற நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் மிருதங்க வாத்தியம் அடிக்கடி கலந்து கொள்வதால் அந்நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்கே ஒரு தனித்தன்மையும், முழுமையும் ஏற்படுகிறது.

இன்றைய உலகில் எல்லாப் பொருள்களுக்கும் தகுந்த முறையில் அடிக்கடி விளம்பரம் செய்வதன் மூலம், வியாபாரம் செழிக்கிறது. பொருள்கள் மிக உசத்தியாக இருந்தாலும், இதற்கும் விளம்பரம் தேவைப்படுகிறது. ஆகவே, இந்தக் கொள்கையானது கலை உலகிற்கும் இப்போது மிகத் தேவையாக இருக்கிறது. நம் கர்நாடக சங்கீதத்தின் பெருமையை இன்னும் அதிக அளவில் உலகெங்கும் உயர்த்துவதுதான் கலைஞர்களும், கலா ஸ்தாபனங்களும் செய்ய வேண்டிய முக்கியமான கடமையாகும். இதற்கு வேண்டிய செயல்கள் அனைத்தையும் நமது மாநில, மத்திய அரசாங்கங்களும், சங்கீத வித்வத் சபை போன்ற பெரிய கலா நிறுவனங்களும் செய்ய வேண்டுமெனக் கேட்டுக் கொள்கிறேன்.

எனது குருநாதர்களின் வாசிப்பு முறைகளின் அடிப்படையில், பழமையைத் தழுவினதும், அதன் உயரிய பாதையில் பாட்டிற்கு, வாத்தியங்களுக்கு, தனி ஆவர்த்தன நிகழ்ச்சிகள், தாள வாத்திய நிகழ்ச்சிகளிலிருந்து ஜாக்ஸ்பந்தி, Jazz, Fusion போன்ற நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்குத் தக்கவாறு புதியதான மிருதங்க வாசிப்பு முறைகளை அமைத்து, வித்வான்களும், இனைய தலைமுறைக் கலைஞர்களும், ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இசையில் உள்ள லய வாத்திய வித்வான்களும், மேலை நாட்டில் உள்ள பிரபல கலைஞர்களும் இதன் நுணுக்கங்களை எடுத்துக்கொண்டு பின்பற்றும் வகையிலும், யாவருக்கும் ரசிக்கும் வகையிலும் உள்ள ஒரு மிருதங்க பாணியை எனக்கு அளித்த நாதரூபமான பரம் பொருளை நமஸ்கரிக்கிறேன்.

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